



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





69.

STUDIES
IN 80737
LITTLE-KNOWN SUBJECTS.

has. dw. BY
C. E. PLUMPTRE,
AUTHOR OF "NATURAL CAUSATION," ETC.



LONDON:
SWAN SONNENSCHN & CO., LIM.
PATERNOSTER SQUARE.
1898.



PREFACE

THE whole of the following Essays have already appeared in print, having been published in various periodicals during the last thirteen years. They are reprinted here with but trifling alterations. For the most part they are quite detached Essays, and in collecting them ~~save for the line~~

ERRATA.

Page 38, line 18, for "Alhagen" *read* "Alhazen".

Page 69, line 2, for "had" *read* "has".

Page 139, line 27, for "an" *read* "man".

THE first, which, save to the professed student, are hardly known at all. Yet if the two Essays on Thackeray's Letters and Charles Bradlaugh are excepted, I think the subjects in the Second Part can hardly be called well-known; and even with these two Essays, though the names of Thackeray and Bradlaugh are familiar to almost all English-speaking people, the incidents in the lives of both touched upon here are not very familiar.

The Essay upon Bradlaugh appeared originally in the form of an Appeal to the public, in order to try and clear his name from the debts left by him, owing solely to the unjust litigation forced upon him. Though I am glad to say that the necessity for an Appeal has to a large extent—if not altogether—passed away, I have, after some deliberation, thought it better to reprint the article in its original form.

As is almost inevitable in collecting in one volume Essays that have been spread over a good many years, here and there will be found trifling repetitions. But they are, I think, not very frequent; occurring chiefly in the two papers upon Bruno and in the two sections of the paper on the Census. In these, writing on the same subjects for quite distinct classes of readers, I have had necessarily to go, to some extent, over the same ground. I prefer, however, incurring the charge of occasionally repeating myself to that of obscurity, which might with some justice arise were I to remove illustrations or examples originally appended for the elucidation of passages requiring explanation.

It only remains for me here to thank those editors of the periodicals in which the Essays originally appeared, for their courtesy in allowing me to reprint them.

C. E. PLUMPTRE.

CONTENTS

PART I.

Studies in Times Past.

	PAGE
I. LUCILIO VANINI. (1885)	1
II. ON ROGER BACON'S <i>Cure of Old Age</i> . (1887) . .	22
III. ON SOME OF THE OBSCURER PHILOSOPHERS DURING THE PERIOD OF THE RENAISSANCE. (1888) . .	36
IV. GIORDANO BRUNO AND THE SCOTTISH REVIEWER. (1889)	61
V. GIORDANO BRUNO: HIS LIFE AND PHILOSOPHY. (1889)	87
VI. THE <i>Tragedy</i> OF BERNADINO OCHINO. (1897) . .	128

PART II.

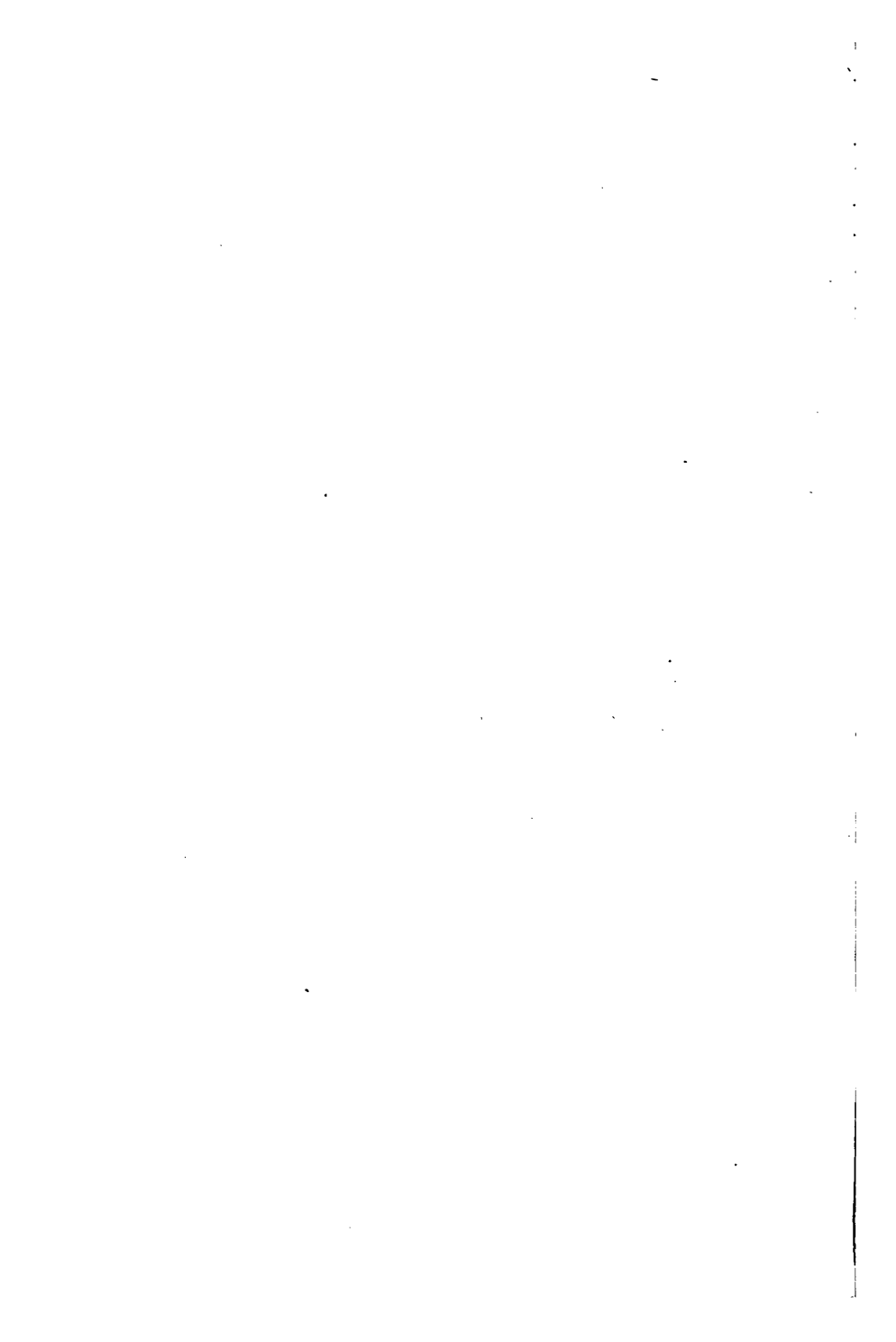
Studies in Times Present.

I. PROGRESS IN JAPAN. (1886)	153
II. EDUCATION IN JAPAN. (1886)	169
III. THACKERAY'S LETTERS. (1888)	183
IV. JOHN FRANCIS AND THE <i>Athenæum</i> . (1890) . .	197
V. ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF VITAL STATISTICS AND THE NECESSITY OF AN ACCURATE CENSUS. (1890, 1891)	217
VI. CHARLES BRADLAUGH: AN APPEAL. (1891) . .	250
VII. ON THE DUTY OF HONESTY IN OUR CONVICTIONS. (1892)	269

	PAGE
VIII. THE CENTENARY OF DEAN RAMSAY. (1893) . . .	280
IX. ON THE GRAVER WRITINGS OF JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL. (1893).	292
X. ON THE REASONABLENESS OF PERSONAL DIRECTION IN PERSONAL MATTERS. (1893)	301
XI. THE HIGHER SECULARISM. (1894)	313
XII. ON COBBETT'S ADVICE TO YOUNG MEN. (1894) . . .	321
XIII. ON MIND AS CONTROLLED BY MATTER. (1895) . . .	334
XIV. ON THE WISDOM OF LOOKING AT THE BRIGHT SIDE OF LIFE. (1895).	345
XV. ON WATER AND ITS DIVERSE FORMS. (1895). . . .	353
XVI. ON THE DIFFICULTY OF OBTAINING ADEQUATE KNOW- LEDGE OF OURSELVES AND OTHERS. (1896)	367
XVII. ON THE PROGRESS OF LIBERTY OF THOUGHT DURING THE LAST SIXTY YEARS. (1897)	377
XVIII. ENGLAND IN THE DECLINING YEARS OF THE NINE- TEENTH CENTURY. (1897)	391

PART I.

STUDIES IN TIMES PAST.



STUDIES

IN

LITTLE-KNOWN SUBJECTS.

Lucilio Vanini: His Life and Philosophy.

IT has been well said that "all the thoughts of men from the beginning of the world until now are linked together into one great chain," but the links are of different sizes and of unequal brilliancy; and it seems to me that in the natural and, in many ways, laudable desire to do honour to those thirty or forty greatest names in religion, philosophy, and science that outdazzle all the others by their surpassing splendour, we are prone to treat with too little consideration those obscurer names which yet are as necessary to the stability, perhaps even to the existence, of the chain as the most brilliant ones amongst them.

At least, let me acknowledge for myself that I have a peculiar sympathy with those humbler seekers after truth—too great to be content with the ephemeral pleasures of the hour, not great enough to be the founders of a system that would bear their name through the ages that were to come; too great to

escape the obloquy that is sure to be the immediate penalty of honesty and originality, not great enough, or perhaps not fortunate enough, to be able to live the obloquy down; the martyrs of their cause rather than the apostles of it; the sowers, not the reapers; many of them indeed putting forward their views so tentatively, groping as it were in the dark, that we feel that they were deprived of the highest consolation of all: not only does posterity refuse to acknowledge that they found the light; for the most part they died unblessed by the certainty, even to themselves, that after all their search had not been in vain.

Europe has been busy of late celebrating the third and fifth centenaries of Luther and Wickliffe. Before* this year passes away I am anxious to draw attention to the tercentenary of a man who, if but little known now, was yet of sufficient importance in his own day to pay the penalty for his opinions by being burnt alive for them.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the Catholic Church had in reality to protect herself against three different schools of opponents:

1. The Reformation: numerically and otherwise by far the most openly antagonistic; though whether the most really dangerous, future centuries must decide; numbering amongst its numbers men of indomitable courage, of intense conviction, anxious to substitute one form of authority for another; fervent; honest; reckless of humanity in persecuting their opponents, yet in their turn not flinching from persecution them-

* This refers to 1885.

selves; nay, at times seeming to court it, coveting as their greatest glory the martyr's crown.

2. The Renaissance, or learning and culture in general; numbering amongst its members men devoted to the more refined pleasures of this world; scholarly, artistic, bright, good-humoured, though perhaps not entirely free from cynicism; unfeignedly attached to learning, yet, speaking generally, not sufficiently so to run any great risk in prosecuting it; complying with the religious customs of whatever country they might be in; not openly antagonistic to any form of religion, because viewing all alike with a certain contempt; and regarding with amazement, unmixed with admiration, those enthusiastic reformers who seemed to enjoy persecuting others and being persecuted themselves with equal ardour.

3. The Philosophers, or seekers after truth—men who though differing greatly from each other in their conclusions, were yet alike in their rejection of authority as authority; in their earnest longing to be able to give some reason for the faith that was in them; in their intolerance only of intolerance; in their abstention from persecution themselves; and (speaking generally, though not without exception) in their noble refusal to shelter themselves from the most atrocious persecution by the faintest approach to a lie. The better known among these are Servetus, Galileo, Descartes, Spinoza; the less known are Giordano Bruno, Ochino, Telesio, Campanella, and the subject of this sketch, least known of all, it may be, to readers of this generation. Yet in his time Vanini was celebrated

throughout Europe for his philosophical opinions, which were not only new and uncommon, but peculiarly adapted to the taste of the age. They were written in a very pure Latin, and altogether displayed so much ability and industry as fully to warrant the following eulogium from an anonymous author of about a century afterwards, who, notwithstanding his praise, yet held Vanini's philosophical and religious opinions in the utmost detestation:

"You will find him a man of learning, very ambitious, subtle, of an easy address, jovial in conversation, and full of spirit and activity, which the various and surprising adventures of his life sufficiently testify, and endowed with such bright natural faculties that history can scarce produce his equal; but as he misapplied his talent Providence made him as notorious in his punishment, his execution being so terrible that one cannot read it without being shocked."

Lucilio Vanini was born at Taurasano, a market-town in the kingdom of Naples, in the year 1585; the exact month of his birth seems to be uncertain. His father's name was John Baptista Vanini, steward to Don Francis de Castro, Duke of Taurasano, Viceroy of Naples, and afterwards ambassador of Spain to the court of Rome. His mother was called Beatrix Lopes de Noguera, and came of a Spanish family of distinction. As he grew up to youth his father sent him to Rome for the completion of his education, and he studied there principally philosophy and divinity. His tutor was a Carmelite friar called Barthelemi Argotti, a man famous for his great and varied learning. Vanini became greatly

attached to him; he mentions him frequently in his works, and calls him "a phoenix of the preachers of his time." With nearly equal praise he mentions another Carmelite called John Bacon, "an ornament to the Averroists, formerly my preceptor, and from whom I have learnt to swear by none but Averroes." From Rome Vanini returned to Naples, where he continued his philosophical studies. As soon as his education was completed he became a priest, and speedily attracted considerable attention by his gift of preaching. Subsequently he became a student of law, and on the title-page of his *Dialogues* describes himself as "Doctor in utroque jure." From Naples he went to Padua, where the purity of the air, the softness of the climate, and especially the companionship of men of letters, detained him for some years. He had little or no private fortune, and often found it a hard struggle to continue his studies. "But all is warm," he says, "to those that love; have I not sustained at Padua the greatest frost in winter with a poor and thin dress, animated only with a desire of learning?"

At last his labours were rewarded by the consciousness that he was really in possession of knowledge sufficient to enable him to go through all Europe, to visit the universities, and assist at the conferences of the learned. His favourite authors were Aristotle, Averroes, and Pomponatius. The system of Averroes, in particular, was so highly esteemed by him that he made it a text-book with his disciples.

From his own works I am led to believe that at the beginning of his career Vanini was a conscientious

Catholic. He did not shut his eyes to the fact that faith and reason seemed at times to be strangely opposed to each other. But, in common with many of his day, he seemed to have held that there was some intrinsic merit in accepting statements as true that were utterly beyond the capability of verification. Indeed, in all ages is it not a somewhat notable fact that belief without any grounds for belief has been held by the devout to be an act of peculiar merit?

The works of Vanini are numerous; but, so far as I am aware, two only, his *Amphitheatre* and *Dialogues*, have come down to us, of which I will now give a brief description. The first is entitled *Amphitheatrum æternæ providentiæ Divino-Magicum, Christiano-Physicum, Astrologico-Catholicum, adversus veteres Philosophos, Atheos, Epicuros, Peripateticos, Stoicos, etc.* It was printed at Lyons, 1615, and dedicated to the Count of Castro, protector of his family and his benefactor; and it was approved by four doctors, who acknowledge to have found nothing in it against the Catholic faith.

A few months after the publication of the *Amphitheatre* Vanini renounced his name of *Lucilio* for that of Julius Cæsar, for what reason is not quite apparent. His enemies assert that it was through vainglory, imagining himself to be as great a conqueror in the realms of philosophy as Cæsar in military tactics and generalship. But it seems to me far more probable that Vanini made the change through motives of prudence; for in his short life we find him assuming three or four different names. At one time, in Gascony, he called himself Pompeio; in Holland he

was known as Julius Cæsar; in Paris as Jolio Cesare Vanini; at Lyons he added to this the name of Taurasano; and at Toulouse he was known as Sieur Lucilio.

In the year 1616 was published his *Dialogues*, the title of which ran as follows: *Julii Cæsaris Vanini Neapolitani Theoligi, philosophi juris utriusque Doctoris de admirandis Naturæ Reginæ Deæque Mortalium Arcanis Libri quatuor. Lutetiæ apud Adrianum Perier. Anno 1616. Sub privilegio Regis.* On the other side of the title-page was written the following approbation: "We, the underwritten Doctors of Divinity of Paris, certify to have read these *Dialogues* of Julius Cæsar Vanini, a famous philosopher, and we have found nothing repugnant to the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion in them; but, on the contrary, think them well worth being printed. The 20th May, 1616. Signed, F. Edmond Corradin, Guardian of the Convent of Minimes, at Paris; F. Claude de Petit, Doctor Regent." These *Dialogues* are dedicated to the Marshal of Basompierre, and the dedication is an amusing illustration of the flowery, complimentary style so much in vogue on the Continent at that day.

"What shall I say," says Vanini to Basompierre in this dedication, "of the charms of your beauty? It is by that means you have deserved the tenderness of an infinite number of ladies, more charming than the Helens of old. It is also that same beauty which triumphs over the conceitedness of atheists, and imposes on them silence, and suppresses their impiety.

For when they but contemplate the majesty and stateliness of your visage, they must readily own that even among mankind there are found traces of Divinity."

Towards the conclusion of the dedication he becomes even more high-flown in his expressions. "If I were," he says, "a disciple of Plato, I should kiss and adore you as the soul of the world."

The *Amphitheatre* is less open to condemnation than the *Dialogues*, though it is not so guarded as to render it easy to understand how it should have received formal approval from four doctors. Its tendency is certainly not atheistic, but it is rationalistic. He describes the design of the work in the preface.

"I propose," he says, "in this work to unfold and make plain all the mysteries of Providence; but do not expect that I should take them from the declamations used by Cicero, nor from those dreams, or rather plausible ravings, of the divine philosopher, and yet much less from the absurd impertinences of our scholastics; but I shall draw them from the source of the most hidden philosophy, as being best able to quench the thirst of curious minds."

The *Amphitheatre* consists of fifty chapters, or *exercises*, as Vanini prefers to call them; and I will now, as far as my limited space permits, give an abstract of the most salient portion of it.

The first two chapters deal with the existence and nature of God, in the second of which occurs a very fine passage, too long to quote here. The next twenty chapters deal generally with the subject of moral providence. Vanini treats this question in a more

equivocal way than the existence of God, in which, at all events in his earlier work, he seems to have had unhesitating belief. Ostensibly, his purpose is to refute the objections of various philosophers against the doctrine of Moral Providence; but these objections are stated with a certain quiet force and clearness, and the answers with almost equal weakness, as it appears to me; whether because the facts of nature are really against special interposition, or whether Vanini is here beginning tentatively to feel his way to disclosing his own doubts, is not easy to decide. The latter portion of the *Amphitheatre* is occupied with the consideration of the monstrosities that occur in nature, such as the existence of the idiot, the deformed, etc. Vanini here again is very guarded; nevertheless I think that his tendency is to give a distinctly materialistic interpretation of these occurrences. Then after submitting his work to the judgment and authority of the Most Holy Father Pope Paul V., Vanini concludes the *Amphitheatre* with the following fine passage:—

“La volonté suprême, animée du souffle divin, emporte mon âme qui va tenter une voie nouvelle sur les ailes de Dédale.

“Qui osera mesurer la Divinité ineffable, qui n’a pas commencé, et la décrire dans les bornes étroites d’un esprit poétique?

“Origine et fin de toutes choses, la source et le principe, le but et le terme de son être;

“Dans son repos, Dieu est tout, en tous lieux et en tout temps, distribué dans toutes les parties, il est tout entrer dans chaque endroit.

"Aucun lieu, aucunes régions ne le renferment dans leur limites ; ils le possèdent ; mais, tout entier à tout, il se dissemine librement dans l'espace.

"Sa puissance suprême est de vouloir ; son œuvre est une volonté invariable, il est grand sans quantité et bons sans qualité.

"Ce qu'il dit est produit aussitôt, l'œuvre suit la parole ; il a parlé, et à sa voix tout a été.

"Il voit tout ; seul il est dans toutes ses œuvres ; le passé, le présent et l'avenir, il prévoit tout éternellement.

"Toujours le même, il remplit tout de son être et soutient toute chose ; il soutient l'univers, le meut et l'embrasse ; il le gouverne d'un signe de son sourcil.

"O Dieu bon, je t'en supplie, jette sur moi un regard, joins moi à toi par un nœud de diamant, ton seul et unique but est de faire des heureux.

"Quiconque se réunit à toi, s'élève ; uni à toi seul il embrasse tout, à toi qui t'épanches sur tout et à qui rien ne manque.

"Jamais tu n'abandonnes un être qui a besoin de toi, de ton propre mouvement tu donnes tout à toutes choses ; à l'univers tu subordonnes tout et toi-même.

"Tu es la force de ceux qui travaillent, le port ouvert aux naufragés, la source éternelle qui repand la fraîcheur dans les eaux.

"Repos suprême, paix et calme de nos cœurs, tu es la mesure et le mode des choses, l'espèce et la forme que nous aimons.

"C'est toi qui es la règle, le poids, le nombre, la beauté ; toi qui es l'ordre, l'honneur et l'amour en

toute chose; le salut et la vie, le nectar et la volupté divine.

"Source de la sagesse profonde, lumière véritable, loi vénérable, tu es l'espérance infaillible, l'éternelle raison, la voie et la vérité.

"Gloire, splendeur, lumière désirable, lumière inviolable et suprême; tu es la perfection des perfections; quoi encore? le plus grand, le meilleur, l'un, le même."*

The "Dialogues" are supposed to take place between two persons, Alexander and Julius Cæsar, the latter being presumably Vanini himself. Occasionally, but very rarely, a third speaker is introduced, called Tarsius.

The dialogues are sixty in number, and many of them of considerable length. I can therefore only draw the reader's attention to such among them as seem to me the most curious or important. The earlier deal chiefly with subjects connected with natural philosophy or natural history: the sun, moon, earth, the movement of the stars, the generation of fishes, the generation and habits of bees, etc. The thirty-seventh dialogue, entitled "De l'Origine de l'Homme," deals with a subject that has occupied the attention of our greatest thinkers during the latter portion of this century, and is of singular interest, because it shows that, crude as are many of Vanini's conjectures concerning the origin of man, throughout

* Pages 206, 207. I quote by the French edition of M. X. Rousselet, as being more comprehensible to the general reader than the original edition in Latin, which, however, I have by me for purposes of comparison.

them all there is a certain adumbration of that theory of evolution accepted now by all the best scientific intellects of our day. To readers of Vanini's own generation, and especially to such as were his enemies, this chapter was also one of the most pregnant in the book, for notwithstanding that Vanini had sought to shelter his opinions under the form of a dialogue, in which the opposite sides of the subject are equally stated, he could not conceal the fact—perhaps, indeed, he did not wish to conceal it—that in his belief the doctrine that man had a natural, rather than a supernatural, origin, was not easy to refute.

The fifty-sixth dialogue is on Auguries, and Vanini, after discussing the strangely wide-spread belief in auguries amongst the ancients, incidentally touches upon a subject that I imagine must have perplexed many of the more thoughtful believers in revelation of his day, viz., How comes it, that if God is omnipotent, and if He is willing that all should be saved, so many—according to the Christian scheme of salvation—will perish? Must not the power of the devil be greater than that of God? It was against the will of God that Adam and Eve fell and lost all mankind. The devil wills that all should be damned, and there are an innumerable many. Amongst the inhabitants of the earth the Roman Catholics alone can be saved. If from these are subtracted hidden heretics and Jews, atheists, blasphemers, adulterers, none of which shall inherit the kingdom of God, scarce shall one be saved in a million. In like manner, under the law of Moses, all the universe was under

the power of the devil—the Hebrews only excepted, that adored the true God, and who were the inhabitants of a small tract, not exceeding the extent of the island of Great Britain; yet these also often forsook His worship and became victims to the power of the devil.

The conclusion of the *Dialogues* is principally occupied with a somewhat melancholy description of the uncertainty of human life and the transitory nature of earthly fame and glory. Alexander endeavouring to comfort Julius Cæsar by reminding him of the very great reputation he had already attained at his still early age, and by insisting that investigation into the secrets of Nature must be a supreme delight in itself.

Notwithstanding Vanini's submission of his works to the authority of the Church, and that he had been wary enough to couch his *Dialogues* in the necessarily ambiguous form of question and answer, they no sooner became generally known than they began to draw upon their author the gravest suspicion of heresy. Vanini fled from Paris and took refuge in Toulouse, where he lived for a few months in comparative retirement, under the name of Sieur Lucilio, surrounded, however, by a band of enthusiastic young disciples.

He could not have chosen a more unfortunate place of refuge than the city of Toulouse. Neither Paris nor any city in Italy was so rampant against heresy as Toulouse. The mere fact that there was a young teacher of philosophy living very quietly was enough to excite the suspicion of the bigoted inhabitants; and when it was found that he was none other than the

author of the now too notorious *Amphitheatre* and *Dialogues upon the Secrets of Nature*, the agitation became extreme. Yet upon investigation nothing could be brought home to him. Had not the whole of his works been submitted to the Sorbonne; and were not the *Amphitheatre* and *Dialogues* marked with the especial approval of that body?

At last a man of wealth and social standing called Franconi, and who had probably introduced himself to Vanini ostensibly as desirous of becoming his pupil, while in reality anxious to entrap him in his words, came forward and affirmed that the writings of Vanini were innocent compared with his conversation.

Such an affirmation was more than sufficient to justify an arrest in Toulouse! A trial was therefore prepared, the Court sitting in solemn conclave, the accuser awaiting gloomily the appearance of the accused.

At length he enters; a young man, in years—having barely attained his thirty-fourth year, though somewhat older in appearance—of benignant aspect and thoughtful appearance. He makes his way to the place of accusation, bows respectfully to those assembled, and accepts a seat pointed out to him. Then the all-important question is asked: What are your opinions concerning the nature of a God? He answers calmly and earnestly: "Nature evidently demonstrates to me the existence of a God; nay, with our Holy Church I adore a God in Three Persons."

There is silence for a few moments, then Vanini, perceiving a straw lying at his feet, stoops to pick

it up; and, after a slight pause, stretches forth his hand with the straw in it, and says:—

“This straw obliges me to confess that there is a God. The grain being cast into the earth appears at first to be destroyed and whitens; then it becomes green, and shoots forth out of the earth, insensibly growing. The dew assists its springing up, and the rain gives it yet a greater strength. It is furnished with ears, of which the points keep off the birds. The stalk rises, and is covered with leaves; it becomes yellow, and rises higher. A little later it withers until it dies. It is thrashed; and the straw being separated from the corn, this latter serves for the nourishment of men, and the former is given to animals created for man’s use.”

Vanini pauses for a brief space as he lays down the straw, and then continues:—

“From the fact of the existence of this straw I conclude it must have had an author; and if God be the author of the straw, so likewise do I infer that He must be the author of all things.”

Then someone present—probably Franconi—seeking to entrap him into some unsafe answer, suggests: “Why should the existence of a straw lead you to infer that its author must be God? Is not Nature herself sufficient to account for the production of all natural objects?”

Vanini again stoops to pick up the straw, and answers:—

“If Nature hath produced this grain, who hath produced that grain which preceded this? If that

also be produced by Nature, let us consider its foregoer, and thus go to the very first, which must necessarily have been created, since there can be imagined no other cause for its production."

Few other questions are asked him. But it matters little that his accusers have been unable to entrap him into any self-condemnatory answers. His death had been predetermined by them, and they declare that his confession of a God had been wrung from him through fear and caution, not from conviction. He is commanded to kneel, and then his sentence is pronounced: "In thy shirt, with a torch in thy hand, shalt thou make honorary atonement for thy sins; after which thou shalt be drawn upon a hurdle to the place of execution, where, thy tongue being cut out, thou shalt be burnt alive."

Vanini listens quietly while his sentence is pronounced, and at its conclusion bows his head, murmuring half to himself, "I die as a philosopher."

Two slightly differing accounts of Vanini's execution have come down to us. They are both by contemporaries; but as they are both written by men who hated him, and who fully acquiesced in the justice of his sentence, their descriptions must be taken only for what they are worth.

The first and most bitter is by Gramond, who, after fully relating the details of his trial, proceeds thus:—*

"Notwithstanding, as the proofs against him were convincing, he was, by arrest of Parliament, condemned

* *Historiarum Galliae ab excessu Henrici IV.*, liber iii., pp. 209, 210.

to die, after they had passed a whole six months in preparing things for a hearing. I saw him in the dung-cart when he was carried to execution making sport of a friar, who was allowed him in order to comfort and reclaim him from his obstinacy. Such momentary assistance is of little use to a desperate man. It would be better to allow these criminals, condemned to die, a sufficient interval to the end that they might have time to know themselves and repent, after having thrown forth all their rage and indignation. In France they at once declare sentence of death to a criminal, and amidst the horror which the dread of the execution causes they carry him to it. In Spain, and all the rest of Europe, their method is much preferable. They allow criminals time sufficient to appease the horrors of death and expiate their crimes by penitence and confession. Vanini, wild and obstinate, refused the consolation of the friar accompanying him, and insulted even our Saviour in these words: *'He sweated with weakness and fear in going to suffer death, and I die undaunted.'* This villain had no reason to say he died fearless. I beheld him entirely dejected, and making a very ill use of that philosophy he so much boasted of. Being ready to be executed, he had a horrible and most wild aspect. His mind uneasy, and testifying in all his words great anxiety, although from time to time he cried out, he died a philosopher. But that he departed rather like a brute cannot be denied. Before they set fire to the wood pile he was ordered to put his tongue out to be cut off, which he refused

to do; nor could the hangman take hold of it but with pincers in order to perform the execution. There was never heard a more dreadful screech than he gave then. You would have taken it for the bellowing of an ox. The rest of his body was consumed by fire, and his ashes thrown into the air.

"Such was the end of Lucilio Vanini. That beastly scream (*cri de bête*) he gave before his death is a proof of his small share of constancy. I saw him in prison, I saw him at the gallows, and likewise knew him before he was arrested. Given up to his passions, he wallowed in voluptuousness; in prison he was a Catholic. He went to execution destitute of philosophy, and at last ended his life raving mad. When living he searched very much into the secrets of Nature, and rather professed physic than divinity, though he loved the title of Divine. When they seized his goods there was found a great toad alive, shut up in a large crystal bottle full of water, upon which he was accused of witchcraft; but he answered that that animal, being consumed by fire, was a sure antidote against all pestilential diseases. He often went to the Sacraments during his imprisonment, and cunningly dissembled his inward sentiments. But when he found there was no hope of escaping he disclosed them, and died as he had lived."

The French *Mercury* differs somewhat in its account of the scene, especially as regards the behaviour of Vanini:—*

"He died as freely and with as much constancy

* *Le Mercure Francois*, pp. 63, 64, anno 1619.

and patience as ever man did. For coming out of the prison he joyfully and briskly uttered these words in Italian: 'Let me go and die cheerfully as a philosopher.' But, moreover, to show his undauntedness in dying and the despair of his soul, when he was told to call out to God for mercy, he spake these words in the presence of a thousand spectators: 'There is neither God nor Devil; for were there a God I would entreat Him to consume this Parliament with His thunder as being altogether unjust and wicked; and were there a Devil I would also pray him to swallow it up in some subterranean place. But since there is neither the one nor the other I cannot do it.' *"

So died Lucilio Vanini; leaving behind him but a very few disciples, not one of whom, so far as I am aware, having done anything to make himself remembered. And the cause is not far to seek. Vanini was the founder of no system. He was a seeker after truth; no one could justly call him a discoverer.

What part then does Vanini represent in that great chain of thought to which I alluded in the beginning of this paper? He was a martyr to that spirit of Rationalism which is the presiding genius of true philosophy, as it is the unflinching antagonist of superstition. He was a martyr to that spirit which insists upon knowing the why and wherefore of a doctrine

* This account of Vanini's death is necessarily somewhat similar to that I have given in the chapter devoted to Vanini in the first volume of my *History of Pantheism*, and is from a small French work printed at Rotterdam in 1717 by Gaspar Fritzch.

before accepting it; which will take nothing for granted; which looks upon doubt as an imperious duty, and credulity as a fatal sin. True, his reasons are for the most part merely crude guesses. But in the century in which he lived it was an immense step gained to have the courage to make a guess at all.

We, the heirs and reapers of the fruits of that rationalizing spirit of which he was one of the martyrs, can hardly realize what we owe to it until we compare the civilized world as it is now, when it is partly governed by reason, with what it was then when it was wholly governed by superstition. Look at the subject of medicine alone. Before the age of reason men were taught that cures must be effected by relics of martyrs and bones of saints, by prayers and intercessions, and that each region of the body was under some spiritual charge—the first joint of the right thumb being in the care of God the Father, the second under the blessed Virgin. For each disease there was a saint. A man with sore eyes must invoke St. Clara, but if he had an inflammation elsewhere he must turn to St. Anthony. An ague would demand the assistance of St. Pernel.* Think, too, of the number of innocent women who were burnt alive as witches because they suffered from hysteria or excitability of nerve. Again, how could the science of astronomy be cultivated when the appearance of a comet was looked upon as a sign of God's wrath, to be dealt with by prayers and penitential psalms? Well, Vanini was a martyr to that iconoclastic spirit which refuses any participation in

* DRAPER'S *Intellectual Development of Europe*, vol ii. p. 122.

the sanctification of ignorance. Rather than bow down before her shrine he will risk his life. Take up any of his dialogues—where you will—on bees, on fishes, on the origin of man, on the monstrosities that occur in nature, and you will find that crude and in many ways erroneous as are his speculations, each of them testifies to his belief that all these objects have a natural rather than a supernatural interpretation. He cleared the ground, so to speak, of dust and rubbish, leaving abler men than himself to erect a lasting edifice.

This is the office that Vanini fills in the history of thought—an office so useful and necessary that on this the tercentenary of his birth I trust the time devoted to him here will be considered not wholly wasted.

On Roger Bacon's "Cure of Old Age."

IF the science of surgery have of late years attained almost perfection, it will hardly be disputed that medicine has still much to learn. Nay, if, as seems likely, the germ theory is the right theory of disease, the science of medicine is yet in its infancy, and we are but on the first steps of the true track.

Though it would be exaggerated to affirm that the ancient medical writers, the Egyptians, Jewish, Alexandrian, and Greek philosophers, anticipated in any real sense of the word the philosophers of this century in the germ theory of disease, yet if we compare their practices, as shown by their writings, with the much blood-letting and huge physicking of our own countrymen, even so lately as the early part of this century, the comparison will hardly be in favour of the moderns.

The earliest and, prior to the sixteenth century, the greatest English writer on medical science is the famous Franciscan friar, Roger Bacon. He was a great student of the Arabian writers, and acknowledges in particular his indebtedness to Isaac Beimiran, the son of Solomon the physician, to Hali Abbas, and to the celebrated Avicenna, flourishing in the eleventh century, and to Averroes, belonging to the following century—the

century, that is to say, preceding that of Bacon himself. He embodied the result of his research, together with his personal observation, in several works—amongst others in one called *The Cure of Old Age*; a now almost forgotten, though sufficiently remarkable, little book. It is probable that his rationalistic investigation into the causes of disease at a time when charms, incantations, and prayers were the principal treatment, may have had as much to do with his fourteen years' imprisonment as the magical and other accusations ostensibly laid to his charge; for *The Cure of Old Age* was distinctly a materialistic work. Throughout it disease is assumed to be capable of rational investigation; to be the result of man's ignorance, sometimes, indeed, of man's vice; but nowhere as a miraculous interposition from the Almighty. This was indeed a glimmer of light in the dark period of the thirteenth century. But it was more than this. Though in many of its details it is necessarily crude, at times, indeed, bordering on absurdity, yet in its essential principles, if we take into consideration the narrow, ill-ventilated, and badly-drained condition of the streets of many of our own cities in the last century, we shall find that it would have been a remarkable and, in many ways, a useful book to publish, even so lately as then. Its style is quaint, perhaps at times a little comical. Science has its superstitions, its dogmatisms, as well as theology; and he of one generation must be, I think, somewhat deficient in a sense of humour in whom the outgrown superstitions of a previous generation do not at times excite a smile.

The *Libellus de Retardandis Senectutis Accidentibus* was printed for the first time in 1590, and was translated as *The Cure of Old Age* by Richard Browne* in 1683. I have adopted the translator's English title because of its convenient brevity. But the rendering is scarcely a happy one; indeed, to some extent, it is absolutely misleading. Probably Roger Bacon knew as well as we do that old age is merely a natural physiological process; and that not being a disease, it is therefore incapable of cure. The whole context of the book, as well as its original title, prove that what the author had in view when writing it was the prevention and cure of premature old age; the delaying or retarding to its utmost natural limits that evil hour when prime strength and maturity must yield to the encroachments of old age and decay.

This little book is written in sixteen short chapters; and partly because of its real intrinsic worth, partly because it is so little known even by industrious students of the thirteenth century, it has occurred to me that a brief analysis of it may be not unwelcome to the readers of this magazine.

The first chapter is devoted to an analysis of the Causes of Old Age. These, in Roger Bacon's opinion, are three; and thus he states them:—

"1. As the world waxeth old men grow old with it; not by reason of the age of the world, but because of the great increase of living creatures, which infect the very air that every way encompasseth us.

* I have frequently availed myself in this paper of Browne's quaint translation.

"2. Through our negligence in ordering our lives.

"3. Our great ignorance of the properties which are in things conducive to health."

I hardly know whether even now a physician could sum up more succinctly the three principal causes of unhealthy life or premature old age. But it is to the first cause assigned by Roger Bacon that I wish principally to call the reader's attention, *i.e.*, "*the great increase of living creatures, which infect the very air that every way encompasseth us.*" Surely this assertion, though it may not have been an actual anticipation of the germ theory of disease, was yet in a certain measure an adumbration of it. The perception that diseases are diffusable, that the mere congregating of a large number of ill-fed and weakly persons together is sufficient to generate disease, and that the very air becomes poisonous through the emanations of breath, perspiration, etc., was a perception that was to bear no fruit at the time. It was a discovery thrown into soil too barren to receive it. The world required to be riper by many centuries before the discovery should be made afresh, and should lead to some practical consequences.

The next few chapters are taken up with detailing more fully the causes of old age, together with the remedies and preventives. Man's enemies are both internal and external. But in youth and full prime, the vigour of a healthy constitution is so great as to make the attacks of these enemies more or less unimportant. But when the fulness of strength is beginning to diminish—in Roger Bacon's opinion in

the fortieth, or at the outside, the fiftieth year—he is not strong enough to cope with these enemies; he will be wiser if he endeavour to elude them altogether. The internal enemies are those ills he brings upon himself by indigestible food. Not what a man eats, but what he digests, is that which nourisheth a man; and thereupon are detailed a list of foods easily, or with difficulty, digested. Whether these details are particularly well selected or no is a matter, for our present purpose, comparatively unimportant. That what is one man's meat is another man's poison has passed into a proverb, and each person must discover for himself what foods are prejudicial or the reverse. But with the broad general principle that diet is important, that careful restriction of food is of much greater value than remedying indiscretion in eating by much physicking, this broad general principle is an anticipation of what is taught now by all honest medical men; though it is only within the last half century, or even less, that such a doctrine has begun to be generally inculcated. The external enemies of man are all those poisonous matters that are comprised under what Roger Bacon defines as *putrefaction*. When we think of all that is comprehended under this head—proximity to graveyards, to cesspools, decaying vegetation, dirt of all description—we cannot but feel that a better term could hardly have been selected. The two great remedies—or, to speak more correctly, preventives of premature old age—then, are “a careful ordering of a man's way of living,” and avoiding all contact with putrefaction. But how can this be done? Bacon is

fully aware of the difficulty. "Who can avoid the air," he asks, "infected with putrid vapours carried about with the force of the wind? Who will measure our meat and drink? Who can weigh in a sure scale or degree sleep and watching, motion and rest, and things that vanish in a moment, and the accidents of the mind, so that they shall neither exceed nor fall short? *

Still, if a man would escape premature old age, if he would attain the utmost limit of natural existence, he must at least endeavour to discover by experience what foods are most easily digested by him,

* I commend to all readers interested in the modern germ theory of disease Professor TYNDALL'S "Essay on Infection and Putrefaction," in his *Fragments of Science*, and also Dr. BUDD'S work on *Typhoid Fever*, frequently referred to in the aforesaid essay. Of course, in tracing Roger Bacon's connection with modern medicine, I do not imply that he really grasped that especial feature of the germ theory round which controversy has chiefly waged, *i.e.*, that certain infectious diseases, such as typhoid, small-pox, etc., can only be generated from already existing germs of the same disease. But I assert that, in his recognition that diseases are not miraculously sent, nor spontaneously generated, none knowing how nor why, but that they arise from putrefying matters, he made an important discovery, that had it only been followed up would almost certainly have led to beneficial results. For though, according to the germ theory of disease, putrefaction does not *originate* infectious diseases, it is conceded, both by the supporters and deniers of the germ theory, that it certainly *promotes* them. Direction of the attention, therefore, to the chief medium for the investigation of these diseases would almost certainly in time have led to a knowledge of this cause, and—since to know the cause is half-way towards discovering the remedy—towards finally stamping out all zymotic diseases. Moreover, Professor Tyndall has, I think, conclusively proved that putrefaction cannot arise without access to "the floating matter of the air." And what is this "floating matter" but Roger Bacon's "living creatures that infect the very air around us," thereby causing putrefaction?

and what are those localities most free from putrefying matters. "How can it be," Bacon asks, "that he who is either negligent or ignorant of diet should ever be cured by any pains of the physicians, or by any virtue of physic? Wherefore the physicians and wise men of old were of opinion that diet without physic sometimes did good; but that physic without diet never made a man one whit the better."

Nor must it be supposed that these internal enemies in the shape of indigestible foods, and these external enemies comprising all putrefying matters, are entirely unconnected one with the other. On the contrary, each acts and reacts on the other. Putrefying matters infect not only the air we breathe, but the water we drink, the soil that nourisheth the grain, the food supporting the animals on which we live. In like manner foods that are in a state of decay, or that when taken inwardly become more or less poisonous to us, affect through the medium of our own unhealthiness the air around us. "That preserveth another thing," says Roger Bacon, "which is long preserved itself, and that corrupts another thing which is quickly corrupted itself." And then, in strange anticipation of a very modern theory, he points out that mountainous or hilly places, breezy open moors, are more healthful for man, beast, and vegetable than valleys or enclosed spaces. And he interprets the fact thus: "Herbs and trees which grow in a good air are more remote from corruption, and are always of a more vehement and stronger virtue; and this comes about by reason of the wind that does then more freely pass

and blow upon all things, drying up putrefaction, whence it is that plants growing in windy and mountainous places are of a stronger and more unshaken virtue. I saw a mountain in the province of the Romans wherein the air was so pure, and the plants of so great goodness, that diseased and infected cattle were in a small space of time cured by them. And the same may be said likewise of animals living in mountainous places." Bacon enlarges at some length upon this necessity of pure air and pure food for all vegetable and animal life. He says he has known certain fish which, when living in pure water, were excellent as food, but which, if placed and allowed to remain a certain time in muddy and foul water, become uneatable; and he also asserts that the goodness of wine depends largely upon the purity of the soil on which it is grown.

I hope, should any of my readers be total abstainers, that I shall not offend them by admitting that Roger Bacon devotes considerable space to the discussion of wine in this little book. He quotes with approval Aristotle's opinion that wine, though unnecessary and very often harmful to the young, is nevertheless beneficial, sometimes absolutely important, to the old. Holding this doctrine, therefore, it is not unreasonable that he should consider the subject of good and bad wine quite worthy of careful attention.

"Red wine," he says, "increases blood more than white, and is in some measure better than all wine, and more agreeable to men's complexions, such, namely, as grows on a soil enclosed between hills and dales,

whose clusters are of a good sweetness and maturity in a subtle and pure air, and which are not gathered before the force of their substance be rebated, their colour become golden—a mean between red and yellow—their taste sharp, pungent, and delectable. When the wine shall be such let a man drink as his age and the nature of the season will permit. For then it will preserve the stomach, strengthen the natural heat, help digestion, defend the body from corruption, carry the food to all parts, and concoct the food till it be turned into very blood. It also cheers the heart, tinges the countenance with red, makes the tongue voluble, begets assurance, and promises much good and profit. If, however, it be over much guzzled it will do a great deal of harm. For it will darken the understanding, ill-affect the brain, render the natural vigour languid, bring forgetfulness, weaken the joints, beget shaking of the limbs and blear-eyedness; it will darken and make black the blood of the heart, whence fear, trembling, and many diseases arise.”

Roger Bacon also devotes a good many pages in this little book to the consideration of the cure and prevention of grey hair; but as this is a somewhat unimportant “accident of old age”—grey hair, indeed, being in the present writer’s opinion ornamental rather than detrimental to the appearance of the old—the reader’s time shall not be unnecessarily occupied. I will content myself with saying that his suggestions on this subject seem to me more quaint and amusing than instructive.

A more important matter to dwell upon is the

extreme attention Bacon attributed to cleanliness and due action of the skin—thus again strangely anticipating the teaching of our century. He asserts—and I believe with perfect truth—that there are certain diseases and ailments in which the humours of the body can only be thrown off by means of the pores of the skin.

This doctrine, important as it is to teach even now, was, I need scarcely say, far more urgent to be taught in the thirteenth century, when uncleanness of the body was quite common always among the poor, and very frequently even among the rich. "Outward nastiness," he says, "will obstruct and stop up the pores. All things that move the blood and spirits to the skin adorn and clothe the skin with beauty, cleanliness, and ruddiness; and this is done by whatever doth gently cleanse the skin, rendering it thinner, and making it clean from those that stick dead on its surface; and in performing this care must be had of three things—cold, heat, and the wind."

Roger Bacon recommends frequent bathing, anointing with oil, and moderate exercise in walking and riding in all those who are approaching old age; and these should be gently but firmly persevered in so long as nature will permit. But when extreme or decrepit old age sets in he points out (and again, I believe, with perfect justice) that the two great enemies of this period in man's life are cold and fatigue; and important though a due action of the skin is, it may be purchased at too high a cost if accompanied by shivering or great fatigue.

I cannot close my sketch of this wise little book without drawing attention to the fact that among other anticipations of a modern age Roger Bacon was fully persuaded in his own mind of the intimate connection there is between mind and body. A man cannot be thoroughly healthy in body if he is very unhealthy in mind; and it is as necessary to pay attention to the one as to the other. For this reason a due habit of cheerfulness must be cultivated; trifles must not be made much of; gloomy thoughts and envious repinings are, if possible, always to be avoided. And since many of the evils that afflict man are of a paltry nature, we must endeavour to cultivate within ourselves a due sense of proportion in order that we shall never confuse small things with great. Nor are all physiological benefits conferred even by mere jest and amusement to be lost sight of. Whatever provokes laughter is good for man; also instrumental music and songs, games, discoursing with beloved friends. For a cheerful mind brings power and vigour, makes a man rejoice, and therefore stirs up Nature and helps her in her actions.

Parallelisms are always interesting and often instructive. I make, therefore, no apology to the reader for showing how this great last truth, enjoined by the "Admirable Doctor" of the thirteenth century, has been (apparently with no conscious imitation) echoed by the great philosopher of the seventeenth century, and re-echoed by the equally great philosopher of our own century.

In the Second Scholium to the Forty-fifth Propo-

sition of the Fourth Part of his *Ethics*; Spinoza thus writes:—

"I acknowledge a great difference between mockery, which I have but just characterized as bad, and laughter or jest. For laughter and jest also are a kind of gladness; and so, if they have nothing of excess about them are good . . . nor do tears and sobs and fear, and other affections of the sort . . . ever lead to virtuous conduct. The more joyfully we feel, on the contrary, to the higher grade of perfection do we rise. . . . To use the good things of life, therefore, and to enjoy ourselves in so far as this may be done short of satiety and disgust—for here excess were not enjoyment—is true wisdom. It is wisdom, I say, in man to refresh and recreate himself by moderate indulgence in pleasant meats and drinks; to take delight in sweet odours; to admire the beauties of plants and flowers; to dress becomingly; to join in many and athletic sports and games; to frequent the theatre and other places of the sort, all of which may be done without injury to others. For the human frame is compacted of many parts of diverse nature, which continually crave fresh and varied aliment in order that the whole body may be alike fit for everything whereof by its nature it is capable, and consequently that the mind also may be in a state to take interest in and understand the greatest possible variety of subjects."*

And Herbert Spencer, in his *Data of Ethics*, writes:—

"Every power, bodily and mental, is increased by

* I quote from Dr. Willis's translation.

'good spirits,' which is our name for a general emotional satisfaction. The truth that the fundamental vital actions—those of nutrition—are furthered by laughter-moving conversation, or rather by the pleasurable feeling causing laughter, is one of old standing; and every dyspeptic knows that in exhilarating company a large and varied dinner, including not very digestible things, may be eaten with impunity; while a small, carefully chosen dinner of simple things, eaten in solitude, will be followed by indigestion. This striking effect on the alimentary system is accompanied by effects equally certain, though less manifest, on the circulation and respiration. Again, one who, released from daily labours and anxieties, receives delights from fine scenery, or is enlivened by the novelties he sees abroad, comes back showing, by toned-up face and vivacious manner, the greater energy with which he is prepared to pursue his avocation. Invalids especially, on whose narrowed margin of vitality the influence of conditions is most visible, habitually show the benefits derived from agreeable states of feeling. A lively social circle, the call of an old friend, or even removal to a brighter room, will, by the induced cheerfulness, much improve the physical state. In brief, as every medical man knows, there is no such tonic as happiness."*

Roger Bacon sums up the results of the injunctions contained in his little book thus:—

"Whence in conclusion it is made manifest that

* *Data of Ethics*, pp. 90, 91.

mirth, singing, looking on beauty and comeliness, spices, electuaries, warm water, bathing, and many such things, are remedies whereby the accidents of age in young men, the infirmities of old age in old men, the weaknesses and diseases of decrepit old age in very old men, may be restrained, retarded, and driven away."

*On Some of the Obscurer Philosophers
during the Period of the Renaissance.*

IN relating the history of thought during a particular period, it is somewhat difficult to assign to its beginning and end a definite date. Modern science has familiarized us with the fact that throughout the realm of natural law sudden commencements, abrupt breaks, hasty terminations are the exceptions; slow, gradual growth is the rule. Nevertheless, it is natural to recall with vividness certain particular facts as if they were isolated, and had no steps leading up to them. The day on which the child utters its first sentence is a day memorable to the mother, even though she may have watched intelligence growing in its eyes for weeks previously. The first leaf that makes its appearance in the new year we naturally hail as the harbinger of spring, even though we know that that leaf could not have appeared without a previous circulation of the sap. Sometimes, for purposes of convenience, we go further than this. We assume particular dates that are quite arbitrary, born, it would seem, almost of caprice. There is no appreciable distinction, for instance, between the moral responsibility of a youth aged twenty years and three

hundred and sixty-four days and of one a day older. Yet he must live to be exactly that day older before he is legally responsible.

In like manner, in tracing the history of philosophy during the period of the Renaissance, it is impossible to assert that such and such a year belonged to the Dark Ages, and the following year to the Renaissance. Slow, gradual growth has occurred here as elsewhere. Nevertheless, for purposes of convenience, and for a better comprehension of the spirit of this period, it is well, I think, to keep in mind three particular facts:—

First, the introduction of Arabian learning into Europe, partly through the influence of Gerbert, afterwards Pope Sylvester II., flourishing about the close of the tenth century; partly through the medium of Roger Bacon, the Franciscan friar of the thirteenth century; but principally, I think, through the fall of Constantinople. In 1453 Constantinople fell into the hands of the Turks.

The second fact to be held in remembrance is the development of the scholastic philosophy, dating from about the eleventh century.

The third fact is the Reformation.

Of these three facts the introduction of Arabian learning into Europe seems to me the most important in its bearing upon the philosophy of the Renaissance. The influence of scholasticism and the Reformation was indirect rather than direct, conducive rather than essential; whereas the introduction of Arabian learning into Europe had an influence at once essential

and direct. In conjunction with the learning of the Arabs must be remembered also that of the Jews.

The Arabians openly acknowledged their indebtedness to the Indians and Greeks; but in many ways they improved upon them. Naturally the experimental method of Aristotle found great favour with them, for the first dawn of Arabian philosophy may be said to have been almost entirely devoted to the science of medicine, to the investigation of health and disease in the human body. While the Europeans were still content with miracle-cure, with shrine-cure, with relic-cure in aid of their sick, the Arabians and Jews were composing medical works that are not without their value even now. Mr. Draper, in his *Intellectual Development of Europe*, has pointed out that it is impossible to read many of their works without seeing that they must have indulged in the forbidden practice of dissection. Alhagen, for instance, born somewhere about 1100, was the first to correct the Greek misconception as to the nature of vision. He showed that the rays of light came from external objects *to* the eye, instead of issuing *from* the eye. He showed also, evidently as the result of anatomical investigation, that the retina is the seat of vision, and that impressions made by light upon it are conveyed along the optic nerve to the brain. The Arabians had invented, or had learnt the use of, many scientific instruments unknown to the Europeans. And I need scarcely point out the superiority of the Arabian system of numerals over the Roman. This system is said to have been introduced into Europe by Gerbert,

Pope Sylvester II., he having learnt it while he was at the Mohametan university of Cordova.

But now the Church, alarmed for her authority and reputation before the presence of the new learning, began to rouse herself a little. She, too, studied Aristotle; but only in the letter, not in the spirit. She ignored his inculcation of experiment and investigation, but eagerly sanctioned and, so to speak, consecrated such of his errors as were in harmony with the teaching of the Church; as, for instance, the geocentric theory of the universe. It is necessary to keep this in mind, for the philosophy of the Renaissance, confusing the use with the abuse, was largely directed against so-called Aristotelianism. And the name of this mixture of pseudo-Aristotelianism and theology is scholasticism. I have sometimes thought that the conventional Christianity of our day bears somewhat the same relationship to the spirit of Christ as the Aristotelianism of scholasticism bore to the spirit of Aristotle. The distinguishing mark, as it appears to me, of Christ's teaching is His insistence that the spirit is of more importance than the letter; life and feeling than mere form and routine—in which case the conventional Christians of the day are further removed from the spirit of Christ than many self-confessed heretics. In like manner when Galileo, representing himself as an antagonist of Aristotle, attacked the Aristotelian doctrine that the heavier of two falling bodies would reach the ground sooner than the other by the direct experiment of letting heavy bodies of unequal weight fall and strike the ground at the same

moment, he, though he knew it not, was nearer the spirit of Aristotle than the so-called Aristotelians, who so worshipped their master that they consecrated even his very errors ; whereas Aristotle, had he been true to his own teaching, would, I think, have rejoiced to find the experimental method of such good service, even though some of his own errors were disclosed thereby. Scholasticism then, so strangely sheltering itself under the name of Aristotle, while utterly ignorant of the spirit of the master, occupied itself not with facts and experiments, but with dialectics and wordy disputes about names rather than things. Its influence upon the philosophy of the Renaissance, therefore, was indirect rather than direct, and lay principally in the spirit of antagonism it excited in the philosophers of that period. It was, therefore, as I have already described it, conducive rather than essential to the movement. One further distinction must be drawn, before we leave the subject, between the spirit of scholasticism and the spirit of the philosophy of the Renaissance. It is customary to call the period of the Renaissance the period of the Revival of Learning. So far as philosophy and science are included thereby, it seems to me that this term more properly belongs to the period and spirit of scholasticism. For scholasticism was principally occupied with reviving and unearthing the teaching and learning of the great dead, reverently accepting their assertions, not because they were proved by well-known facts, but because they were sanctified by time-honoured names. Its basis, therefore, was not truth, but

authority; not personal investigation, but the revival of the learning of others. There is an anecdote, for instance, recorded of a student, who, having detected spots in the sun, communicated his discovery to a certain priest. "My son," replied the priest, "I have read Aristotle many times, and I assure you that there is nothing of the kind mentioned by him. Go in peace, and remember that the spots which you have seen are in your eyes, and not in the sun."

Now under the influence of the Renaissance all this is reversed. The attitude of its philosophy is not simply negative in its treatment of authority. For the most part, in the natural spirit of reaction, it was antagonistic, doing insufficient justice to the undoubted value of the teaching and industry of the great dead, who have planted and sown in order that others may reap. One or two, however, of the more thoughtful of the Renaissance philosophers, though even they are too antagonistic, endeavoured to relegate authority to its rightful place. Giordano Bruno, for instance, one of the most important among them, pointed to a fact that even now is hardly sufficiently recognized, viz., that what are called the olden ages, the ancient times, are in reality the youthful ages, the early times. And conversely, what are spoken of as the recent and modern times are in reality the older. The world, in this latter part of the nineteenth century in which I write, is older by four hundred years than when Bruno pointed out this truth, and he was led to the statement because he had been rebuked for his presumption in venturing to question the authority of one who had

lived so much earlier than himself as Aristotle; the inference drawn being that, because Aristotle had lived so much earlier, therefore, and for that reason alone, was his opinion of so much greater value. Bruno, and many other of the Renaissance philosophers, rightly perceived that the exact converse of this was the case. No doubt the judgment of thoughtful youth is better than that of thoughtless maturity; but assume the same mental and moral capacity, let all other things be equal, and the same individual at forty is more likely to be right in his conclusions than when he was twenty, simply by reason of his greater experience. In even a larger degree the like holds good of generations. Each century in succession has contributed something to the store of general knowledge, and it would be strange and depressing indeed if those who have had the good fortune to be born in the later ages should not be richer in the possession of truth than those born in the earlier. Had Aristotle lived in the time of Bruno he would almost certainly have made fewer false statements. And Bruno's teaching, in its turn, fades before that of Darwin and certain other philosophers of our day. While scholasticism, therefore, occupied itself with consecrating authority and imparting the learning of others, the Renaissance, though not, of course, ignoring the ancient learning, paid the greater honour to original investigation and the discovery of truth.

The third fact to keep in remembrance is the Reformation. And here again this influence is indirect rather than direct, the light thrown by it upon the Renaissance being through what it failed to effect rather than through what it effected.

If we examine into the rise and progress of the Reformation we shall find there to be one or two remarkable points about its distribution that have not received quite sufficient attention. In the sixteenth century the national churches of Great Britain, Sweden, Norway, Holland, and many parts of Germany and Switzerland became separated from the Church of Rome. In Hungary and France, though there was no professed or open disruption from the Papacy, yet the Protestant movement exercised considerable influence. But turn to Italy, and here we find that its influence as a movement is almost *nil*. Individuals, no doubt, there were who accepted the reformed faith. But as a *movement*, whether considered numerically or intellectually, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that in Italy Protestantism exercised no power whatever. One other point I must notice: the almost complete absence in Italy during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries of trials for witchcraft. And yet during these two centuries such trials were more numerous in Germany, France, Spain, Scotland, and England than in any preceding centuries. When trials for witchcraft did occur in Italy they were almost always confined to the sterile or mountainous regions remote from civilization. In the very rare cases of these trials occurring in Italian cities they were notoriously cases not of simple witchcraft, but plausible accusations and pretences employed in the fomentation of conspiracies of private families.*

Can we allege any reason for this absence, so strange

* See SYMOND'S *Catholic Reaction*, vol. ii. pp. 455, 456.

and remarkable, of two beliefs held elsewhere with universal tenacity, or are they only the result of coincidence? If we examine into the intellectual condition of Italy, in comparison with other European countries, we shall find the cause at work not at all impossible of interpretation. During the first twelve centuries superstition had been prevalent throughout the whole of Europe; but there was little or no terrorism. Every act and circumstance of daily life had some magical or supernatural interpretation, and familiarity had bred—not contempt, indeed, but more or less indifference. With the introduction of Arabian learning, more especially of Arabian and Jewish medicine into Italy, came a change of ideas. Medical or surgical theories differ from other theories, in that they are capable of proof that is more or less immediate and palpable. If a man suffering from toothache consent to have the tooth extracted, the cessation of pain follows more obviously and immediately than if he touch a relic of a saint, or pay a certain sum to a priest. But a nation must have reached some degree of civilization before it is capable of receiving truths even so crude as this. And Italy, both from her natural position and historical associations, was more advanced than the rest of Europe, unless we except perhaps a certain portion of Mahometan Spain. Gerbert, who was the first to introduce Arabian learning into Spain and Italy, received the highest dignity possible. He was made Pope. Roger Bacon, two centuries later, for venturing to introduce the same learning into England, was so persecuted that before

he died he lamented that he had devoted so much time to science, seeing the little benefit he had conferred thereby upon his fellows, and the great misery he had brought upon himself.

Slowly and surely Italy became permeated with the scientific theories of the Arabians and Jews. Popes, cardinals, the higher order of monks, accepted the teaching equally with the laity, though neither priests nor laity made the teaching publicly known. Like begets like; and just as the spirit of secularism spread throughout Italy, superstition, through the long reign of ignorance, spread throughout the rest of Europe. At this juncture—in the fourteenth century, that is to say—a great natural phenomenon occurred, which intensified both movements. I allude, of course, to the Black Death. Mr. Lecky has come to the conclusion that, at the lowest estimate, 25,000,000 of inhabitants must have died during the six years of its continuance. Sudden pestilence, even in our own days, is apt to inspire religious terror; but in that period when, save in Italy and a certain part of Mahometan Spain, medicine was unknown, the terrorism engendered was intense. In vain were relics touched or hymns sung. The pestilence proceeded remorselessly on its way. It was a divine infliction for sins committed came to be the general conclusion. But what could these sins be? That was the difficulty. Self-convicted sinners assigned different causes. The deed, however, that excited the most general remorse was the wearing of boots with pointed toes—a custom that had lately come into fashion, and

was supposed to be peculiarly offensive to the Almighty. There was, indeed, one materialistic alternative. In Switzerland and in some parts of Germany the plague was ascribed to poison on the part of the Jews. But for the most part it was regarded as a supernatural infliction, a sign of divine wrath. And when the unhappy victims discovered that neither penance nor penitence availed, fearful lest divine wrath should follow them into another world, they left on their death-beds, as a propitiation, enormous legacies to the Church. See, then, the conditions at work in Italy. On the one hand, secularism spreading through the learning and humanity of the Jewish physicians, and such of the Italians as had profited by Jewish and Arabian learning; on the other hand, the Romish Church profiting by the enormous bequests of the superstitious and ignorant throughout Europe. What wonder that the latter became an imposture and corrupt? What wonder that she acted upon the axiom of the great Father, that "ignorance is the mother of devotion," and forbade all knowledge, save to the select few? Had the spirit of secularism alone progressed all would have been well—nay, even had ignorance been allowed to continue her reign uninterruptedly all perhaps might have been well, though not *so* well; but man cannot lend himself to conscious imposition without morally deteriorating, without becoming throughout corrupt. I need scarcely dilate upon the enormous wickedness brought about by this state of conscious deception. It is a well-known fact of history. Men arrived at that pass of wickedness

where their crimes were not the result of accident, but a trade—where they did not arise from sudden human passions, or almost irresistible temptation, but of set purpose and contrivance. Immorality was openly trafficked in; dishonesty became an organized system. Happily for human nature a state of things so essentially rotten cannot continue long, but carries within it the seeds of its own decline. A moral revolution set in—and the name of this moral revolution is the Reformation.

But though the motive at work in the Reformation was noble, though many of the reformers themselves were sincere and high-minded men, we cannot, I think, read carefully the history of the Reformation without perceiving that its immediate result was to bring about a mass of horrible persecutions, atrocious cruelties, and wholesale misery, such as was not equalled by Catholicism even in its worst days. For centuries, as I have already related, the belief in magic and sorcery, in miraculous interposition of God, saints, or devil, had been universal. Rain, for instance, being considered to be under the superintendence of God, since its action was gentle and beneficent; hail and tempest, for the contrary reason, were under the rule of Satan. Logically, I think the Black Death should have been relegated to Satan, since its action was certainly the reverse of beneficent; but, as we have seen, it was regarded as a divine punishment. But now, when moral evil reigned rampant over the face of Europe, how should it be regarded, save as an effect of the evil one? Suddenly arose a belief in the power

and omnipresence of the devil difficult in these days to realize. There is still a black stain where Luther threw the ink-bottle at the devil in the Castle of Wartzburg. Dread of Satan was thus strangely mixed with the contempt and indifference born of long familiarity. It is difficult to realize the state of mind that can imagine an all-powerful demon could be frightened away by an ink-bottle. At times Luther did not care even to take this trouble. One night he was awakened by a terrible noise. On rising and seeking into its explanation he came to the conclusion that it was "only the devil," and quietly went to sleep again. There was no ill to which flesh is heir that was not supposed to be at the instigation of the devil. Everywhere he employed human agents, but old women were supposed to be his peculiar possession. In the fifteenth, and especially the sixteenth centuries, persecutions for witchcraft spread like fire. Though the movement is chiefly to be traced to the Reformation, it was quickly caught up by the more ignorant part of the Catholic world. In Geneva 500 alleged witches were executed in three months; 900 in a single year burnt at Wartzburg. At Toulouse 400 perished for sorcery at a single execution. There was no love of cruelty in this; there was no dishonesty, no self-seeking. Unhappy women would often come forward and proclaim themselves in commerce with the wicked one. They acquiesced in the justice of their punishment, believing it to be but a temporary foretaste of their eternal doom hereafter.

Why do I dwell upon this? Because I want to

show wherefore it was that Protestantism and witchcraft made so little progress in Italy. The spirit there was secularism, the spirit elsewhere was supernaturalism. The Church of Rome was, indeed, all-powerful still in Italy; but it was the Church in its political aspect. Papacy itself had become more or less pagan. Spiritual life had ceased to exist; the higher aspects of religion and morality were crushed in efforts after mere external government.

But supernaturalism and hatred of sin do not stand to each other in the invariable relationship of cause and effect. Sin is not less odious, whether we believe it to be the effect of some supernatural power, or of man's own ill-regulated passions; nor is hypocrisy less detestable. On the contrary, they seem to me to be more odious and more detestable, since they are more within human control. A revolution, at once moral and intellectual, arose also in Italy; though, alas! it was the revolution of a small minority against an immense and all-powerful majority. And the name of this revolution is the Philosophy of the Renaissance.

The noblest, and, in many respects, the most important of these Italian revolutionists was Giordano Bruno. He was born in 1548, a few miles from Naples. He had a passionate love for truth, both in the abstract and more ordinary sense of the word, possessing to an unusual extent that longing to solve the unfathomable mystery of the world that presses upon all earnest minds, coupled with a passionate hatred of dishonesty or equivocation. And one of his

works—the *Spaccio della Bestia Trionfante*—is an open attack upon what he calls “that orthodoxy without morality and without belief, which is the ruin of all justice and virtue.” He had, what was almost unique in his day, a toleration, almost an admiration, for people who differed from him, so long only as they were honest in their professions. Thus no two people could have been further removed in their intellectual and religious beliefs than he and Luther; yet for Luther he had an admiration unfeigned and undisguised, whereas upon his own countrymen, whom he knew to hold very much the same opinions as himself, he was unsparing in his vituperation and contempt, because they openly professed a belief they had long since secretly renounced. This warfare against hypocrisy he waged to the end of his life, and his horrible death by burning was in large measure due to this staunchness to honesty. His passion for abstract truth was more easily satisfied, and was found in a sort of pantheistic interpretation of the universe.

“That which the Magians,” he says in one of his works, “Plato, Empedocles, and Plotinus called respectively the Impregnator, the Fabricator of the World, the Distinguisher, the Father or Progenitor, ought in reality to be called the Internal Artificer, seeing it forms the matter and the figure from within: from within the seed or the root it gives forth or unfolds the stem; from within the stem it forces out the boughs; from within the boughs it forces out the branches; from within these it pushes out the

buds; from within it forms, shapes, and interlaces, as with nerves, the leaves, the flowers, the fruits; and from within, at appointed times, it recalls its moisture from the leaves and fruits to the branches, from the branches to the boughs, from the boughs to the stem, from the stem to the root. And there is a like method in the production of animals."

In many ways he anticipated the teaching of our own century, particularly in his belief in the indestructibility of matter. "Every production" (he says), "of whatever sort it be, is an alteration, the substance ever remaining the same, for that is only one—one being, divine, immortal. Pythagoras was able to understand that, instead of fearing death, he need only contemplate a change. All philosophers, commonly called physical, have perceived the same truth when they say that in respect of substance there is neither generation nor corruption, unless under these names we mean to signify alteration. Solomon understood this when he said that there was no new thing under the sun but that which has been already. Understand, then, that all things are in the universe, and the universe in all things; we in that, that in us; and so all meet in one perfect unity. See, then, how vain a thing it is to torment the spirit with anxieties; see how impossible it is that there should be anything about us of which we ought to be fearful. For this unity is alone and stable, and ever remaineth. This One is eternal. Every appearance, every other thing, is vanity—is, as it were, nothing; yea, all that is nothing which

is outside of this One. Those philosophers have found again their mistress Sophia, or Wisdom, who have found this Unity. Verily, and indeed, wisdom, truth, and unity is the same."

In addition to these beliefs Bruno accepted the doctrine of Copernicus, and believed in the infinity of worlds. He even thought it probable that those worlds were inhabited.

There are three other philosophers to whom I desire to call attention. Not that they are so well known as Bruno, but because they are equally typical of the age in which they lived. These are Pomponatius or Pomponazzo, Cardan, and Vanini. The two first were, I believe, less noble in their honesty than Bruno; and Cardan had a certain leaning towards astrology, from which Bruno was almost free.

Pietro Pomponazzo was born at Mantua in 1462, and was of a noble family. He was sent to study at Padua, where, in 1487, he obtained honours. He remained there till 1509, studying many writers, but especially Aristotle. Like the majority of scholars at this period he was somewhat of a disputatious turn, and attracted both opponents and supporters. In the early autumn of 1516 he was seized with a serious illness, and a friar, doubtful of the orthodoxy of his religious beliefs, visited him. Pomponazzo recovered from his illness; but it is said that the arguments used by the friar in endeavouring to convert him led him to the composition of his book on the immortality of the soul, or, as it should more properly be called, the mortality of the soul. The

kind of arguments used by the friar may be seen, I think, by the passage I select from Pomponazzo's work: "I am very well persuaded that the doctrine of mortality of the spirits doth not persuade men to be wicked, and that since they naturally love felicity and hate misery; to make them honest, it suffices to show them that the happiness of life consists in the practice of virtue, and misery in the practice of vice. Indeed, those who inculcate the mortality of the soul open a way to the most perfect virtue, which hath not in view any recompense or chastisements. Those men are brutal to whom the immortality of the soul must be proposed as a bribe. It is possible that there have been authors who have taught that doctrine without believing it themselves, using it as a stratagem to restrain the evil inclinations of vicious minds. It is not generally true that they are degraded persons who hold the mortality of the soul; neither are all they wise men who believe the immortality. For it is evident that abundance of ill-livers have faith, but are led away by their passions; and, on the contrary, we know for certain that a great number of wise and good men have held the mortality of the soul."

Girolamo Cardan was born in 1501, nearly forty years after Pomponazzo. The wicked lives of the professed Christians led him, too, to doubt whether really faith and works were inextricably interwoven one with the other; whether belief in the immortality of the soul were so necessary to a good life as was so generally represented.

"Let us now see," he says, "whether the belief in immortality makes men more virtuous or happy. As for my part, I do not perceive it contributes anything towards it. We see in Cicero and Diogenes Laertius that the Epicureans were more upright and honest, and had more true goodness towards men, than the Stoics or Platonics. The reason is, if I mistake not, that *men grow good or bad by custom*. But nobody trusts them who make no profession of an unshaken uprightness, and therefore they are obliged to observe more their honour than others, and to prove themselves such to the public, for fear men should think their practices are according to their sentiments. Hence it is that few men nowadays equal the faith of usurers, which otherwise lead a very bad life. Let it be observed also that the sect of Pharisees, who believed in the resurrection and immortality of the soul, never ceased persecuting Jesus Christ; and that the Sadducees, another sect, which rejected both these articles, attacked Him but very seldom, once or twice at most, and in such a manner that it caused Him no great uneasiness. Again, if you compare the lives of Pliny and Seneca—their lives, I say, and not their words—you will find that Pliny, with his belief of the mortality of the soul, surpasses Seneca in his moral behaviour as much as he (Seneca) surpasses Pliny in his discourse upon religion and virtue. The Epicureans cultivated honesty; they entertained very officiously the children of their pupils, and maintained at their charges the families of their deceased friends. They were looked upon everywhere as honest men, although

they did not regard much the worship of the gods, and denied their existence very strongly. It happens also from that flattering opinion of another life that the wicked have room to exert their passions; the good suffer many things contrary to the welfare of society; and the laws sustain a considerable shock."

The next philosopher to whom I wish to call attention is Lucilio Vanini, born in 1585. His two best-known works are his *Amphitheatre* and his *Dialogues on the Secrets of Nature*. Like Bruno, he was somewhat pantheistic in his religious views, and his *Amphitheatre* is principally occupied in attempting to define what he understands by God. His *Dialogues on the Secrets of Nature* are more purely scientific; and one dialogue in particular, on the "Origin of Species," should be of singular interest to scientific students of our own generation. Necessarily immature as are many of his speculations, it is impossible, I think, to read this dialogue carefully without confessing that, almost unrecognized or forgotten as Vanini has been, he, nevertheless, was certainly a crude pioneer of the evolution theory.

I know few things more curious in the history of thought than to turn from the philosophical and theological beliefs held by the Italian philosophers of the period of the Renaissance to those held by thinkers living about the same period, or even later, in other parts of Europe, especially our own countrymen. While Bruno was pondering upon the infinity of worlds and the indestructibility of matter; while Pomponazzo and Cardan were questioning the

doctrine of the immortality of the soul; while Vanini was speculating upon the origin of species, a man living some years later, and of immense intellectual ability—Lord Bacon—allowed an Act to be enacted which subjected witches to death on the first conviction, even though they should have inflicted no injury on their neighbours; and in his *Advancement of Learning* pronounced the three “declinations from religion” to be “heresies, idolatry, and witchcraft.” Sir Thomas Browne declared that those who denied the existence of witches were atheists and infidels. Even the great Shakspeare, though he may not have believed in witches, certainly, I think, believed in ghosts. How far it is permissible to determine the opinions of a dramatic writer by the opinions he puts into the mouths of his characters is, of course, somewhat difficult to decide. We have no right, perhaps, to assume that Shakspeare believed in witches, because when writing of Scotland at a relatively barbarous period he made Macbeth believe that the three crones who visited him were witches. But when he makes a great philosophical character like Hamlet believe at once, and without questioning, that the spirit of his father, clad in ghostly armour, appeared to him, we are justified, I think, in assuming that belief in ghosts was, at all events, held by Shakspeare to be most reasonable. Had Vanini been capable of creating a character so meditative and grand as Hamlet, he, steeped with the learning of the Arabian and Jewish physicians, would assuredly have made his hero, on disappearance of the vision, question whether the

apparition were not, after all, the result of an excited brain or disordered digestion. But with Shakspeare's Hamlet these possibilities do not seem even to have occurred.

In comparing thus the philosophers of the Italian Renaissance with Shakspeare and Bacon I have no wish to represent them as the superiors, or even the equals of Shakspeare or Bacon. There is no greater mistake than in attempting to gauge the mental capacity of a man by the wisdom or folly of his beliefs. An average schoolboy can jest now at the witches believed in by Bacon, or the ghosts believed in by Shakspeare, but that does not make the average schoolboy in any way comparable to Shakspeare or Bacon. Our beliefs are the result of certain complex conditions of heredity and environment. And the condition in Italy, through causes I have endeavoured to explain, was secular at this period, unless, perhaps, we except a slight leaning towards belief in astrology; whereas in other countries it was superstitious. How strangely, how—with that one exception—entirely secular the condition of Italy was at this period may be seen by the fact that the Italian philosophers do not appear to have gone through that painful stage of transition, familiar to most of us even now, where they have learnt to doubt, but have not learnt to regard doubt as innocent, much less as needful, as in reality it is. In the words of J. S. Mill, "he who only knows his own side knows little of that." And in the interests of truth and religion themselves it is necessary that all sides should be represented with equal courage and honesty. Nevertheless, I

believe that there are few earnest minds in our day and country who have not in their youth gone through this painful stage of transition. But, so far as I am able to judge from their writings, this stage was almost entirely unknown to the Italians of the Renaissance, thereby showing how intensely secular were the conditions. They debated questions such as the infinity of worlds, the origin of species, the immortality of the soul—questions, some of which even now are touched upon, more or less, with bated breath—with as little consciousness of wrong-doing, with as much quiet impersonal feeling as we have when considering whether the moon has or has not an atmosphere. Sometimes, indeed, they equivocated, but that arose from their natural dread of the Inquisition. This natural fear, for the most part, they bravely controlled, and were burnt alive in consequence. The nobler fear of moral wrong-doing by indulgence in doubt they had not to contend against, for they were without it. It is almost impossible to over-estimate the advantage conferred on them thereby. A process of construction could be carried on without any previous process of destruction, and the process of destruction is often a painful and always a difficult one.

In dealing with the philosophy of the Renaissance in its historical aspects we have hitherto occupied ourselves with tracing its relationship to the preceding centuries, and to the ages more or less contemporaneous with itself. We have also seen in what way Italian thought was connected with or divided from philosophical thought in other countries. It now remains to

trace the relationship of the philosophy of the Italian Renaissance with various European ideas in succeeding ages.

It is never safe to prophesy; but it appears to me that when our own century shall have passed away sufficiently long to allow of it being viewed in due perspective with other centuries, we shall find there to be a greater resemblance between the Italian philosophy of the Renaissance period and the German, English, and French philosophy of the latter part of the nineteenth century than in the intervening ages. There is the same dislike of mere authority; of authority, that is to say, that shrinks from the test of experiment and fact; there is the same distrust of supernatural interpretations where natural ones are to be had; there is the same comparative avoidance of metaphysics; there is the same longing for truth. But with here and there a noble exception, we have not as yet, I think, quite the same moral courage of our convictions. This is probably the result of certain conditions of conscience we have inherited from our ancestors. It may be that the twentieth century will have to dawn upon most of us before we are capable of recognizing the complete innocence of following our investigations to their utmost logical conclusions, before we are able to perceive truth to be a thing so blameless and pure that she need not shrink from the light thrown upon her by the glare of any criticism, however brilliant, however unsparing. Certain distinctions, of course, there are, inseparable where there is an interval of four centuries between two periods. In

scientific knowledge there has been an immense development. What was crude speculation in the Renaissance period has grown to be a recognized fact in our own period. Seed, in the natural course of time, has grown into maturity. But when all allowances are made, I think the resemblance between the essential spirit of the Renaissance and the essential spirit of English, German, and French philosophy in the latter half of our own century will be found to be sufficiently remarkable.

*“Giordano Bruno” and the Scottish
Reviewer.*

IN the July and October numbers of the *Scottish Review*, 1888, have appeared two articles, or to speak more correctly, two parts of one article, devoted to Giordano Bruno. The name of the first is “Giordano Bruno before the Venetian Inquisition”; the name of the second, “The Ultimate Fate of Giordano Bruno.” They are both written in a strong spirit of antagonism to the Italian philosopher, though on page 246 of the *Scottish Review* the reviewer poses as one anxious to be very impartial in order to “place the evidence of both sides before the reader, and so enable him to arrive at an opinion for himself.” They seem to be inspired by the reviewer’s indignation that men so distinguished as Herbert Spencer, Max Müller, Renan, and others should have thought fit to associate themselves into an English national committee in connection with the international one formed to procure the erection of a monument to Bruno’s honour; or that two ladies—Mesdames Oppenheim and Ashurst-Venturi—should be found so lost to natural refinement as to desire to do public homage to the author of *Il Candelaio*.

It is not easy, in a few pages, to give any adequate description of the very spiritual and abstruse philosophy

of the Neapolitan thinker. Yet without comprehending somewhat of the philosophy it is difficult to understand the man, and next to impossible to understand the man without a knowledge of the times and of the country in which he lived. Perhaps in no age was religion less lovely than under the form of the Roman Catholicism of the sixteenth century, as presented in Italy. Indeed, in any real sense of the word, religion there was none. The Church still existed, it is true, but it was the Church in her political aspect. The Papacy itself had become half pagan. Virtue was at as low an ebb as religion. Men flattered and truckled for place; and women (since in the words of the immortal Mrs. Poyser, "God Almighty made 'em to match the men") forgot all dignity and all modesty in their anxiety to become the wives or mistresses of such successful mates. On the other hand, science had made a greater leap than in any previous similar interval of time. Bruno had a passion for truth, both in the abstract and concrete sense of the word; and he was one of the very few at that period capable of toleration, or even admiration, of the upholder of opinions with which he did not himself agree. Thus intellectually he dissented far more from the Lutheran than the Catholic doctrines; but for the Lutherans themselves he had nothing but praise, because he could see that they were genuine in their belief; whereas upon the Catholic he was unsparing in his vituperation, because of the rampant unbelief and servile place-hunting hidden under the thinnest veil of orthodoxy. Yet it was his love for abstract truth that

held the largest place in his heart. He possessed to a degree almost unsurpassed that longing to penetrate the mystery of the universe that presses upon most thoughtful minds. The Copernican theory, then in all the freshness of novelty, had a fascination for him. In addition he studied Lucretius, and began to conceive Nature as One and Uniform, until he gradually grew to adopt as his own religious belief a singularly subtle and refined kind of pantheism :—

“That which the Magians, Plato, Empedocles, and Plotinus called respectively the Impregnator, the Fabricator of the World, the Distinguisher, the Father or Progenitor, ought in reality to be called the *Internal Artificer*, seeing that it forms the matter and the figure from within. From within the seed or root it gives forth or enfolds the stem; from within the stem it forces out the boughs; from within the boughs it forces out the branches; from within these it pushes out the buds; from within it forms shapes, and interlaces as with nerves the leaves, the flowers, the fruits; and from within, at appointed times, it recalls its moisture from the leaves and fruits to the branches; from the branches to the boughs; from the boughs to the stem; from the stem to the root. And there is a like method in the production of animals.” “Not only is life found in all things, but the soul is that which is the substantial form of all things.” “This glorious Universe, then, is one and Infinite. Within this One are found multitude and number. . . . Every production, of whatever sort it be, is an alteration, the substance ever remaining the same; for that is only One—one Being,

Divine, Immortal. Pythagoras was able to understand that, instead of fearing death, he need only contemplate a change. All philosophers, commonly called physical, have perceived the same thought, when they say that in respect of substance there is neither generation nor corruption, unless by these names we signify alteration. Solomon understood it when he said that there was no new thing under the sun. Understand, then, that all things are in the universe, and the universe is in all things; we in that, that in us, and so all meet in one perfect Unity. For this Unity is alone and stable, and always remains. This One is Eternal. . . . These philosophers have again found their mistress, Sophia or Wisdom, who have found this Unity. Verily and indeed Wisdom, Truth, and Unity are but different names for the same thing." Yet it was astronomy that fascinated him, almost more than his religious philosophy; or rather it formed the best vehicle for its presentation. "These magnificent stars and shining bodies," he exclaims, "which are so many inhabited worlds, and grand living creatures and excellent divinities, could not be what they are, could not have any permanent relation to each other, if there were not some cause or principle which they set forth in their operations, and the infinite excellence and majesty of which they with innumerable voices proclaim." And when before the Inquisition he justified his belief in an Infinite Universe, saying that he held it a thing unworthy of Divine goodness and power that being able to produce infinite worlds one alone should be produced. Yet he believed in the efficacy of good

works far more than in any particular system of dogmas. And though he had a cordial esteem for certain individual Protestants, strongly deprecated the Lutheran doctrine of Justification by Faith; denouncing that kind of religion which would teach the people to confide in Faith without works as no religion in the true sense of the word. He even considered that it should be extirpated from the world as much as serpents or noxious beasts, since if carried out into daily life every bad tendency would become more bad; indeed, anyone who, under the pretext of Religion or Reformation, should exalt Faith at the expense of good works, should be called *Deformer* rather than *Reformer*.

Such, in very brief compass, is an outline of the Neapolitan's philosophy.

Now, when a monument is about to be erected in honour of a man holding Bruno's opinions, it is not only excusable but desirable that one holding opposite opinions should have his say. We hardly know Truth to be Truth till we have heard all that can be said against her. And had the reviewer criticised Bruno's doctrines to the utmost degree of severity I—even had I thought well to answer the criticism—should have done so in a spirit quite different from that in which I am about to criticise the two articles before us.

But the reviewer has attempted no criticism of Bruno's works. His plan of attack, either through suppression or distortion of Bruno's true meaning, is so to denigrate him as to make it appear to be a shame for any virtuous man or woman even so much as to speak of him.

Indeed, so startling at times is his absolute misapprehension of his subject, that it has occurred more than once to the present writer whether the reviewer have really read one of Bruno's works for himself; or whether his only acquaintance with them be not through a mere second-hand and greatly garbled source. Take this comedy of *Il Candelaio* for instance. What right has he to speak of it as Bruno's "great dramatic work"?* and throughout both articles almost invariably to speak of Bruno by no other name than that of "the author of the *Candelaio*." If he have any acquaintance with the other and much better-known works of Bruno, many of which are of rare spirituality and beauty, he must know it to be as essentially misleading thus to name him as the author of this one play, as it would be to give the great poetic creator of Hamlet, King Lear, and Richard the Second no worthier name than "the author of the *Merry Wives of Windsor*." Had Shakspeare written no worthier play than this, assuredly he would not now be seated on the highest throne, peerless among poets; had Bruno written no nobler work than *Il Candelaio*, assuredly distinguished men throughout Europe would not now be seeking to do honour to his memory. Though not printed till 1582, *Il Candelaio*, as the reviewer himself concedes, was probably written when Bruno was a very young man; and though not wanting in passages of epigrammatic brilliancy, is certainly quite unworthy of his later works. It is a slight comedy, written to suit the taste of the period, in

* *Scottish Review*, p. 97.

which he satirizes love, alchemy, and pedantry. The pedant is the hero; and the play probably gets its name from the fact of the pedant, after making ridiculous mistakes, proclaiming himself to be one of the lights of the world: Bruno dubbing him in sarcasm *Candelajo*, because the light to be gained from such a typical apostle of learning in those days was hardly more than that to be obtained from a candle.* Though the motto of the comedy is *In tristitia hilaris, in hilaritate tristis*, it is probable that Bruno's chief object in writing was to gain a little money, he being entirely without private means.

The reviewer next draws attention to a few lines occurring in the dedication to Philip Sidney of one of Bruno's finest works, *Eroici Furori*, in which Bruno speaks somewhat slightly of women; and our reviewer, assuming a tone of virtuous indignation, asks whether the ladies who "gave their names to appear publicly as promoting the monument to Bruno knew what was 'his attitude and language in relation to their sex?'" But he has carefully suppressed the context, and has said nothing of Bruno's aim and object in thus expressing himself. Deprived of its context, the passage so absolutely misrepresents Bruno's true meaning, that it is needful for me to show how entirely disingenuous is the reviewer's mode of attack.

In all ages and in all countries it has been an impulse almost universal with those rare souls—of whom, perhaps, there are not more than a few in each century—

* Such at least is the interpretation in the admirable French work on Bruno by Bartolmèss.

penetrated with a longing for divine wisdom ; craving for some communion with God, for some interpretation of the Mystery of the universe, to represent that longing under the semblance of earthly cravings and appetites. Thus the psalmist describes his longing for God under the imagery of a hart panting for water. And in an eastern climate, where the glare and heat of the sun's rays are intense, and where there are large tracts of land devoid of water, we can hardly imagine a metaphor more pathetic or more descriptive of intense longing than that of a timid, hunted animal panting for water beyond its reach. So, again, Christ, preaching to the multitude, comprised largely of the lowest classes, and therefore but too familiar with the pangs of semi-starvation, told them to "hunger and thirst" after righteousness ; and, again, we feel that no imagery could be more realistic and fit. But now Bruno, himself in the prime of manhood, and writing to Philip Sidney, six years younger than himself, and known as the disconsolate lover of *Stella*, thought that he could not more fitly describe his passion for divine philosophy than under the guise of a lover's yearning for his beloved, in order to make Sidney fully understand how irresistible was the attraction divine wisdom possessed for him ; how impossible it was for him to cease from pursuit of her ; how unconquerable was his determination to devote his entire energies—if necessary, even his life and liberty—to her service, to the defence of her honour, and the proclamation of her beauty. And if, as the reviewer is so eager to point out, Bruno has decried the attractiveness of woman

in language not in accordance with modern taste, and is somewhat contemptuous of the lover's frenzy, he had done so only because, in the spirit of antithesis so characteristic of all his works, he wishes thereby to show forth the far greater attractiveness of divine truth in her pure and dazzling spotlessness. Moreover, it must be remembered that adulation of woman was carried to an exaggerated extent in his day; and that woman herself, with certain brilliant exceptions, was seldom to be seen at her noblest. To Bruno it seemed at once pitiable and incomprehensible that men should devote labour and time and high poetic gifts to composing sonnets to an eyebrow, or ditties to a small hand; and it may be that in dedicating the *Eroici Furori* to Sidney he was endeavouring tentatively and very delicately to arouse in him the perception that there were nobler themes to exercise his gifts upon than the glorification of a lady who, if we may trust history, was hardly worthy of such labours. Yet Bruno was no ascetic; neither did he wish to stunt natural affection. Moreover, he was fully capable of admiring women worthy of admiration. His praise of the English Queen Elizabeth arose solely from his perception of her more than ordinary ability; his affection and reverence for Madame Castelnau, the gentle wife of the high-minded French ambassador, in whose house he lived on terms of intimacy for three years, was solely evoked by his admiration of her domestic qualities. But he deprecated the extent to which the worship of woman was carried, hindering thereby man's devotion to higher subjects. "What shall I say? How conclude, O illus-

trious *Cavaliero!*” he continues in this same dedication. “Give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s; that is to say, let woman receive the homage and admiration meet for her, but not the adoration that should alone be evoked by divine things.”

I hold it to be as absolutely dishonest in the reviewer thus to single out for odium these few lines of Bruno, while carefully omitting to state his object in so writing (especially as he must be fully aware of the little probability there would be of his readers being able to correct his misrepresentations by knowledge of Bruno’s works at first hand), as it would be if he were to inform some member of an alien religion, anxious for a knowledge of the Bible, though possessing no copy for himself, that it inculcated Atheism, since it contained the plain assertion, *There is no God*, consciously omitting to add the all-important, qualifying context, *The fool hath said in his heart*. The great cardinal virtues in their true essence will always remain the same; but the garb which they wear varies with every clime and every age. It is useless to expect from an Italian dramatist of the sixteenth century expressions as absolutely free from offence as from a Wordsworth or Tennyson; but it is the letter that killeth, and the spirit that giveth life. And he who has learnt to penetrate beneath the appearance of things will find in this dedication of the *Eroici Furori* to Sidney nothing more—or, shall I say? nothing *less*—than a glorification of divine wisdom at the expense of earthly beauty.

Bruno was fond of this comparison between his

passion for wisdom and that of the lover for his mistress, and recurs to it again and again. In another of his dedications—that to the French ambassador, Castelnau de Mauvissière—though the phraseology he employs is of a soberer character, as was natural to one of Castelnau's soberer years, the essential imagery will be found to be the same. It is the dedication to one of the noblest of Bruno's works, *Del Infinito Universo e Mondi*. In it occurs this passage:— *

"I despise the authority of the multitude, and am enamoured of one particular lady. It is for her that I am free in servitude, content in pain, rich in necessity, and alive in death; and, therefore, it is likewise for her that I envy not those who are slaves in the midst of liberty, who suffer pain in their enjoyment of pleasure, who are poor though overflowing with riches, and dead when they are reputed to live. . . . Hence it is, even from my passion for this beauty, that as being weary I draw not back my feet from the difficult road; nor, as being lazy, hang down my hands from the work that is before me. . . . If I err, I am far from thinking that I do, and whether I speak or write, I dispute not for the mere love of victory (for I look upon all reputation and conquest to be hateful to God, to be most vile and dishonourable without truth); but it is for the love of true wisdom, and by the studious admiration of this mistress that I fatigue, that I disquiet, that I torment myself."

Which is most likely to be the truer representation of the real Bruno? A work written when he was

* I avail myself of Toland's translation.

a very young man, confessedly a comedy, and therefore only written to amuse; or a dedication (written in the first person, and obviously representing the writer's own views) to one of his most carefully thought-out works—a work, moreover, of which he had full perception, that did it bring him attention at all, it could but be of a dangerous and opprobrious kind. Such a work could have no *raison d'être*, save that it came from his inmost conviction.

But, in truth, it is not only in this work that Bruno thus reveals himself. It is impossible for any real student of his life and works not to see that the Scottish reviewer is not even able dimly to conceive the character that he is at such pains to denigrate; is quite unable to realize that, if at times Bruno seems to speak slightly of earthly love, it is only that all love pales before his passion for the divine mistress, to whom he has dedicated his life, and for whom he will even not shrink from death. Listen to this sonnet for instance:—

Amor, per cui tant' alto il ver discerno,
Ch' apre le porte di diamante e nere,
Per gli occhi entra il mio nume, e per vedere
Nasce, vive, si nutre, ha regno eterno,
Fa scorgere, quant' ha il ciel, terra et inferno
Fa presenti d' assenti effigie vere
Ripiglia forze, e trando dritto fere,
E impiaga sempre il cor, scopre ogn' interno.
Oh dunque, volgo vile, al vero attendi
Porgi l' orecchio al mio dir non fallace,
Apri, apri, se puoi, gli occhi, insano e bieco !
Fanciullo il credi, che per poco intendi,
Per che ratto ti cangi, ei par fugace,
Per esser orbo tu, lo chiamo cieco !

Causa, Principio, ed Uno sempiterno,
 Onde l' esser, la vita, il moto pende,
 E a lungo, a largo, e profondo si stende,
 Quanto si dice in ciel, terra ed inferno ;
 Con senso, con ragion, con mente scerno,
 Ch' atto, misura e conto non comprende
 Quel vigor, mole, e numero, che tende
 Oltr' ogn' inferior, mezzo e superno.
 Cieco error, tempo avaro, ria fortuna
 Sorda invidia, vil rabbia, iniquo zelo
 Crudo cor, empio ingegno, strano ardire
 Non basteranno a farmi l' aria bruna
 Non mi porrann' avanti gli occhi il velo
 Non faran mai, ch' il mio bel sol non mire.*

These two sonnets are at the conclusion of the dedication of the *De la Causa, Principio ed Uno*. Had the reviewer read them I wonder, or was he even aware of their existence when he represents his sense of modesty so outraged by two ladies having allowed their names publicly to appear in connection with the scheme now afloat to do honour to the memory of Bruno? Or take a still finer sonnet—one that has been admirably translated by Mr. J. A. Symonds:—

Poi che spiegate ho l' ali al bel desio
 Quanto più sotto il piè l' aria mi scorgo,
 Più le veloci penne al vento porgo,
 E spregio il mondo, e verso il ciel m' invio
 Nè del figliol di Dedalo il fin rio
 Fa che giù pieghi, anzi via più risorgo
 Ch' io cadrò morto a terra, ben m' accorgo ;
 Ma qual vita pareggia al morir mio ?

* This sonnet has been translated by my late uncle, Dean Plumptre of Wells, in a little volume of verse called *Things New and Old*, p. 113.

La voce del mio cor per l' aria sento :
Ovi mi porti, temerario ? China
Chè raro è senza duol troppo ardimento
Non temer, respond' io, l' alta ruina !
Fendi sicur le nubi, e muor' contento,
S' il ciel si illustre morte ne destina !

This sonnet, together with many others nearly equally fine in their spiritual grandeur, appears in the *Eroici Furori*. Now the *Eroici Furori* Bruno dedicated, as we know, to Sir Philip Sidney. Had the Scottish reviewer really read it for himself, I wonder, when he stigmatizes Bruno as *a creature* whom Sir Philip Sidney "would not so much as name" ?

And, again, in his splendidly dramatic oration before the professors and assemblage of the University of Wittenberg in the year 1588, Bruno describes in his vivid Italian manner the legend of the three goddesses who appeared before Paris. They are allegorical, he says, of a like vision that has appeared before himself. The first goddess to present herself before him was Venus. He would hardly be an Italian did he not realize her attractiveness to the full ; yet while she gratifies the eyes she has no hold upon the soul. "Let those in love," he exclaims, "give their service to Venus ; for she is beloved of gods and men." The next goddess to appear before him is Juno. Yet neither can she satisfy his longings : "Let others," he says, "pay homage to her who with Jove is the ruler of nations." Then lastly appears Minerva, of dark and threatening aspect. At first he turns away from her ; to her surely he will never feel attracted. Then slowly,

almost imperceptibly, his senses become enthralled, his soul intoxicated. She has thrown a magnetic spell upon him from which it is in vain to try and escape. Then suddenly he awakes to the perception of her loveliness and breaks out into an eulogy upon her. How was it that he had thought her first aspect so threatening? How could he have deemed her unattractive? She, and she alone, shall be the star and goddess of his adoration. What are the beauties of Venus in comparison with those of Minerva? What can Juno bestow which is not within the gift of Minerva? And so on, in a speech too long for reproduction here; but a good abbreviated description of which will be found in the recent life of Bruno, published in Trübner's Philosophical Series.

But now, our reviewer having proved, to his own satisfaction, Bruno to be a "creature" so utterly and shamelessly worthless as to make it a matter wholly incomprehensible that there should be found persons of repute capable even of mentioning him, let us pass from this part of our subject and proceed to the other, viz., the ridicule the reviewer casts at such distinguished men throughout Europe and America as have actually been able to convince themselves that the "author of the *Candelajo*" was ever burnt at all. In this part of his article, as elsewhere, he persists in speaking of Bruno as the "author of the *Candelajo*"; though he must know that it is not in this character that distinguished men are now seeking to do him honour; that had he written only this work, he would assuredly have

faded from memory ; that had he not written it, his philosophy, his scientific speculations — which the astronomer Kepler esteemed very highly — together with his life and death, would have fully accounted for the interest so tardily displayed in him. Indeed, so far from the projected monument being *because* of this work, we might almost say (were it not the fact that it is only known to a few Bruno students) that it is *in spite* of it. To proceed, however, to the question of Bruno's death.

The Scottish reviewer advances very few original arguments in support of his position, but confessedly bases the larger part of his discussion upon a small pamphlet consisting of twenty-seven pages, published in 1885 by M. Desdoutis, called *La Légende tragique de Jordano Bruno—comment elle a été formée—son origine suspecte—et son envraiesemblance*—a pamphlet that has become tolerably well known to most English readers interested in Bruno through Mr. R. C. Christie's lucid examination and refutation of it in the October number of *Macmillan's Magazine*, 1885. To this article, however, the reviewer makes no allusion ; and here, as in his attack upon Bruno's works, it is difficult to decide whether he is really in ignorance of all but his own side, or whether, knowing the other, he consciously suppresses it. I have not seen M. Desdoutis's pamphlet myself, but his argument, both from Mr. Christie's and the Scottish reviewer's account of it, seems to be as follows :—

The only piece of evidence on which the burning of Bruno rests is a letter purporting to be written

by Gaspar Schoppe, or Scioppius, from Rome on the 17th of February, 1600, to Conrad Rittershusius, professor of law at Altdorf, giving a detailed account of the trial of Bruno by the Inquisition, and of his burning, which, as Scioppius alleged, had occurred that day, and at which he was present. The letter is evidently from one who not only had no sympathy with Bruno's opinions, but fully acquiesced in the justice of his sentence. For in it, after giving a detailed account of Bruno's life, opinions, and trial, he proceeds: "To-day, then, he was led to the stake. When the image of the crucified Saviour was shown to him he repelled it with disdain and with a savage air. The wretch died in the middle of the flames, and I have no doubt that he has gone to relate in those other worlds which he had imagined how the Romans are accustomed to treat the blasphemers and the impious. You see, my dear friend, in what manner we proceed here against this species of men, or rather of monsters." Now this letter, though purporting to be written on the day of Bruno's execution, was not printed till 1620; and M. Desdovits submits that it was a forgery. His reasons for so thinking, and Mr. Christie's examination of them, will be seen in the article in *Macmillan* already mentioned. But M. Desdovits goes further than this. He says that no contemporary mentions Bruno as having been burnt, though he acknowledges in a supplement that his attention has been called to a line of Mersenne, who in his *Impiété des Deistes*, printed in 1624, speaks of Bruno as "*un athée brûlé en Italie.*"

But he is not aware that in the *Correspondence of Kepler and Brengger*, first printed in 1858, occurs this passage from one of Kepler's letters: "I learned from Wacker that Bruno was burnt at Rome, and that he suffered his punishment with firmness." Now Wacker, in February, 1600, was residing at Rome as the Imperial Ambassador. This testimony the reviewer stigmatizes as *gossip*. But M. Desdovits alleges a still further reason for his scepticism as to the alleged burning of Bruno. He asserts there to be an entire absence of all "official" record of his execution. But he is evidently in ignorance of Berti's *Documenti intorno a Giordano Bruno*, and of the *Copernico e le Vicende del systema Copernicano in Italia con documenti inedite intorno a Giordano Bruno e Galileo*, also by Berti, but published a few years earlier. In these two works Berti summarizes the results of the investigations of various Italian scholars during the last twenty-five years in the archives of the Vatican, in which a full and undeniable account of Bruno's death is given, and in the archives of the Inquisition, in which there is an equally full account of the trial and sentence. Moreover, the Scottish reviewer himself draws attention to another testimony (of which also Berti makes brief mention on page 75 of his *Documenti intorno a G. Bruno, Roma, 1881*), viz., that the archives of *San Giovanni Decollato* contain a notice of the execution of Bruno given in all its details. The day of the week is stated to be Thursday; the day of the month, the 16th of February; the year, 1600. The reviewer has made a calculation, and finds

that the 16th of February in the year 1600 fell on a Wednesday. And upon this mistake he draws his conclusions that the entire account is untrustworthy. He has evidently forgotten, which is somewhat strange, seeing that, unlike M. Desdout, he is conversant with the records of the Vatican and Inquisition, that Bruno's death has always been represented as falling on the 17th of February, and this would be on a Thursday. Thus the mistake is not in the day of the week, but in the difference between "16th and 17th," a mistake that might easily be traced to a misprint, or to careless copying. However, so as to give the reviewer's criticism its fullest weight, I will suppose it to be not any slight verbal slip, but a *bond fide* error, and we shall find the *pros* and *cons* of the case to be as follows:—

For.

I. A letter from Scioppius, giving a full and detailed account of the execution of Bruno, which took place on Thursday, February 17, 1600, in the presence of Scioppius himself. This letter having been conclusively proved to be genuine from internal evidence by Mr. R. C. Christie.

II. Mersenne's mention of Bruno as *un athée brulé en Italie* in a work printed in 1624.

III. The Imperial Ambassador, Wacker, residing at Rome in 1600, informing Kepler of the event.

Against.

I. None.

II. None.

III. None.

For.

IV. The full detail of the trial and sentence contained in the archives of the Inquisition.

V. *The Avvisi di Roma* (contained in the manuscripts of the Vatican, a sort of newspaper in those days) of February 19, 1600, records the execution of Bruno as having taken place on the previous Thursday, the 17th.

VI. The archives of *San Giovanni Decollato*, containing a notice of the execution of Bruno, given in all its details. The day of the week is said to be Thursday; the day of the month, February 16; the year, 1600.

Against.

IV. None.

V. The reviewer attempts to throw discredit on this source of information as being anonymous. But as he is perfectly willing to accept the same authority in proof that Bruno was not burnt on the 12th of the month as was first contemplated, it is difficult to see where he draws the distinction.

VI. A false statement of the day of the month representing the execution to have occurred on the 16th instead of the 17th of February.

In addition to the reviewer's discovery of the error in the day of the week (as he imagined it to be), he lays stress upon the fact of Bruno's death having received so little attention from contemporaries, seeing that the year 1600 was the year of the Jubilee, and, consequently, Rome was crowded with visitors. But to the present writer this very excitement of the Jubilee seems sufficient to account for the comparatively little attention paid to Bruno's death. A greater excitement invariably drives a lesser from recollection, or even from observation. Bruno's opinions were too

greatly beyond ordinary comprehension to be popular; and he himself was comparatively unknown. Unfortunately, too, deaths by the horrible means of burning, though not so frequent at Rome as at Toulouse, were by no means rare. Was it very likely, then, that at a time of great excitement, such as the Jubilee, the death of Bruno would receive marked attention? Even in our own day, when newspapers are so cheap and news consequently so widespread, how many of the English and foreign visitors, thronging London at the time of our own Queen's Jubilee, would carry away with them any remembrance of the execution of some comparatively unknown criminal? On the whole, if we are to wonder at all, it seems to me under the circumstances I have related that it should rather be at Bruno's death having received even so much, instead of so little, attention.

To be just to the reviewer, however, he does not trust solely to external evidence in support of his position, but points in addition to what he calls "the tremendous antecedent improbability of his having held out"; his line of argument apparently being that since the author of the *Candelajo* was so base in his life, he would be equally base in his death. Here again he exhibits the same remarkable unfamiliarity with all Bruno's greater works. Had he studied them he would have found that the thought of death is seldom absent from the man he has taken such pains to denigrate; who always regarded it with calmness, and sometimes even with longing; who was quite aware of the danger he incurred by so freely

expressing his devotion to philosophy; and who, like the somewhat imprudent knight-errant that he was, not infrequently glories in his very risk. In his work called *Monade, Numero et Figura*, he says, "Death does not terrify me"; and again, later in the same work, he states his belief that it is "those men who have not true philosophy who most fear death." In the *Eroici Furori* he quotes the Latin poet, *Peior est morte timor ipse mortis*, "Death is less terrible than the fear of death." And the sonnet beginning *Poi che spiegate*, that I have already given on p. 73, is, I need scarcely say, expressive of his longing to be found worthy of a glorious death.* It is, unfortunately, but too true that there is always a *possibility* that even the bravest in expression and anticipation may flinch and be false to themselves when brought face to face with the terrible ordeal of death by fire; but the *probability* in Bruno's case is certainly the other way. When taken in conjunction with the almost overwhelming external evidence, I submit that no really impartial investigator can longer doubt that Giordano Bruno was, by order of the Inquisition, burnt alive on Thursday, February 17, 1600.

I trust it will be seen that throughout this article

* At one time there was an inclination among Italian scholars to credit the poet Tansillo with the authorship of this fine sonnet; but I believe now they are coming round to the opinion that it was Bruno's. The reasons assigned for believing it to be the work of Tansillo have never seemed satisfactory to the present writer. It is true that Bruno puts it into the mouth of Tansillo, but only as one of his *dramatis personæ*. There is no note by way of comment in Wagner's Leipzig edition of Bruno's works to show that it differed in any way from the other sonnets.

I have been animated by no feelings of antagonism towards the reviewer's religious opinions, much as I may dissent from them. On the contrary, towards those who are manfully defending that which they hold to be true, and which is endeared to them by the subtle ties, both of ancestry and education, I feel nothing but the truest sympathy, and they would ever be treated by me with tenderest consideration. The reviewer had every right to criticise and expose, so far as possible, Bruno's religious and philosophical opinions. Nor, in a certain sense, would it be very difficult to do so. Though those who are somewhat of the Neapolitan's cast of thought will know that, whatever other value his philosophy may have, at least it has a rarely ennobling influence upon the individual's own soul, since at no time is he so absolutely free from earthly feelings, at no time so absolutely raised above all thought of self, or of things base and low, as when he feels himself penetrated by the consciousness of the Mystery that is about him and beyond him, "that was in existence before he was born, and will continue to exist after he has passed away." Yet to those of another cast of mind such a feeling will always seem like a vain attempt to penetrate the impenetrable; and had the reviewer termed the Neapolitan's philosophy "vague and visionary," I conceive that he would have been within the scope of perfectly legitimate criticism. Again, it was quite open to him to maintain that Bruno almost brought his fate upon himself, since why should he have so imprudently gone to Rome

instead of remaining in England, where he was comparatively free from danger? Nay, even when attempting his most difficult task of all, viz., that of delivering the Catholic Church from what the humanity of the nineteenth century forces upon him, in spite of himself, to perceive to be a stain of extreme cruelty upon her, even then he might have pleaded that it was not, perhaps, so much for his religious and philosophical opinions as for his political that Bruno was burnt. For was not the Neapolitan the panegyrist of Elizabeth? and was not Elizabeth responsible for the death of Mary, Queen of Scotland, the well-beloved daughter of the Church? And was not such a retaliation so natural as to be almost excusable? And though, no doubt, this last defence would at best be imperfect, yet to those who, as the present writer, regard a man's feeling towards the faults of his Church somewhat as that of a son eager to deliver a beloved mother from the imputation of guilt, which, in spite of himself, he knows to be deserved; the weakness of the defence, prompted by motives so excusable and even laudable, would have evoked consideration rather than severity.

But the reviewer has not done this. Sheltering himself under the veil of anonymity in a magazine where the articles are, for the most part, signed; practising upon the probability that among his readers would be found few, if any, intimately acquainted with Bruno's works; he has availed himself of a comedy written in the Neapolitan's early youth, the chief purpose of which presumably was to gain a

little money at a period and in a country where no comedy would have passed muster unless freely interspersed with irreverent and unrefined witticisms, which seemed almost as necessary to give a relish to the taste of that day as they are offensive to our own; in order to denigrate into a "creature too shameful for Philip Sidney even to mention," one who, at least after early youth, almost deserved with Spinoza the name of "God-intoxicated."

Again, he has represented Bruno—honest and outspoken to a fault, since even his greatest sympathizers cannot but deplore his rashness and imprudence—as "a wily Neapolitan, liberated from the Roman gaol upon ticket-of-leave after a long course of humbugging the chaplain, evading the surveillance of the Roman police by going into some territory where he would be free to while away his old age in pursuits congenial to the author of the *Candelajo*, and taking precautions with grim humour against the possible suspicions of the local authorities as to his identity by having accounts of his own execution during a former generation scattered in the literary world."* Lastly, he has thrown doubts upon the fact of his death which the slightest impartial investigation would have shown him to be without basis.

It is only the extreme rarity of Bruno's works that has made me overcome my disinclination to treat even as worthy of comment the reviewer's mode of attack. Upon real Bruno-students his labours will produce no effect, since by distortion so obvious he has over-

* *Scottish Review*, pp. 263, 264, note.

reached himself. Yet there are a large class of thinking persons, many of whom probably are among those anxious to subscribe to the monument, who are without any knowledge at first hand of the Neapolitan's works, who might be seriously prejudiced against him by articles so unfair as those I have been examining. It is for them alone that I have troubled myself to reply, since assuredly upon those possessing knowledge no effect save contempt will be produced. It is those of the reviewer's own school of thought, rather, who have the strongest ground of complaint against him. To them it must be a matter of real concern that their cause should have been entrusted to one either so poorly equipped with knowledge as to be well-nigh in ignorance of all sides but his own; or else so entirely dishonest as unscrupulously to suppress what would tell against him.

Giordano Bruno: His Life and Philosophy.

IN 1885 an English national committee in connection with one that was international (begun ten years earlier, I believe) was formed to procure the erection of a monument to Giordano Bruno, as a fitting though tardy tribute of the gratitude due from men of science and philosophy to the Italian philosopher; and on the 9th June of this year that design saw completion. At about 10.30 on that morning, amid an immense crowd and with the advantage of glorious weather, the procession—consisting of six thousand representatives of the associations, with nineteen hundred and seventy banners and standards, together with about one hundred musicians—wended its way to the Campo dei Fiori, where on February 17th, 1600, Giordano Bruno was burnt alive. Its arrival there was the signal for immense acclamation, while the banners were gradually placed around the monument. At eleven precisely trumpets were blown to announce that the unveiling of the monument was about to take place. The present writer was not fortunate enough to be present,* and, therefore, cannot speak with the authority of an eye-witness; but according to Italian newspapers that have been received, the statue is in all respects worthy

* Since this was written, I have been to Rome and seen the monument for myself. In all essential details the above description is perfectly accurate.

of the occasion, being one of the finest and most completely finished works of the eminent Italian sculptor, Ettore Ferrari. The philosopher is represented as buried in profound thought, having in his left hand a book which he has just ceased to read, while his right hand presses with a sort of nervous tension that which holds the book, the contents of which are evidently the cause of the far-away look in Bruno's eyes. At the base of the monument there are—in *basso rilievo*—three representations of Bruno in different periods of his career, viz., one, where he is arguing with the doctors of the University at Oxford; another, where his sentence of death is being pronounced upon him; a third, where that sentence is about to be fulfilled in the Campo dei Fiori. On another portion of the medallion there are representations of the following apostles of free thought: Wickliffe, Servetus, Paleario, Sarpi, Vanini, and Campanella. On the frontage of the basement there is the following inscription by Bovio:—

IX GUIGNO MDCCCLXXXIX—A BRUNO—

IL SECOLO DA LUI DIVINATO—QUI DOVE IL ROGO—ARSE.

Around this monument were placed about 150 wreaths, one bearing the inscription *Le donne triestine*. At 11.45 the Senator, Maleschott, the Sculptor, Ferrari, and Basso, the President of the Committee, ascended a platform in order to receive certain official documents in connection with the monument, and then amid enthusiastic cries of *Viva Bruno! Viva il Matire del libero*

peusiero! the statue was unveiled. A discourse by the orator Bovio completed the ceremony, and at about 12.50 the procession left the Campo dei Fiori in order to do honour to the memory of Garibaldi.

The connection of England with the monument to Bruno has brought the name of the Italian philosopher into unusual prominence in this country, while his works are still of extreme rarity. It has occurred, therefore, to the present writer that a few pages in description of his life and philosophy might not be unwelcome to the readers of this Review, for their better comprehension of the position Bruno fills in the sixteenth century, and his consequent claims to be remembered by posterity.

For the readier achievement of this object it is necessary to commence with a rapid glance at the various events and influences immediately preceding or succeeding his birth. Few, if any, are entirely independent of their environment, but Bruno, notwithstanding that in many of his scientific speculations he was in advance of his age, was yet, in his personality, peculiarly the product of his own period; not merely by virtue of the interaction between organism and environment common to all, but also and in even greater degrees by *reaction* and rebellion against the prejudices and retrograding influences of his age, which eventually brought upon him the wrath of the Inquisition and led to his death.

Giordano Bruno was born at Nola in Naples in 1548, five years after the death of him who had dethroned the earth from the sovereign position she had previously

been believed to hold in the Solar system—Copernicus. Magellan had been dead barely twenty years, and the circumnavigation of the world and the new ideas resulting therefrom were still in the freshness of novelty. Luther had died in 1546, and the Church was still agitated by the great reformer's denunciations of her enormities. Of more importance still, unhappily for Bruno, was the sudden renewal of vigour in the Inquisition, consequent, probably, upon the spread of Lutheranism. Nor must the Italian Renaissance with all her varied influences be left unnoticed. Her ardour for classical learning—carried almost to a superstitious extent—her love for art, her practical paganism, all combined to give a hitherto unsurpassed predominance to this present world, with its interests and pursuits; to throw into shadow the vague future world about which there was, if not explicitly at least implicitly, considerable scepticism. Strange divergent influences truly! On the one hand, the earth with her interests, her hopes and fears, her ambitions and pursuits—the earth, that is to say, considered relatively to *man*, acquired suddenly a supreme importance. Considered relatively to the *universe*, nay, even to that one portion of the universe called the solar system, she sank with equal suddenness to supreme insignificance—a small globe whirled round with other globes, many of which were larger than herself, in obedience to the power of their sovereign ruler the Sun. One other influence remains to be noticed, most important of all, perhaps, to Bruno, because of the reactionary antagonism excited within him by it, viz., the unpalatable inter-

mixture of gross hypocrisy and abject superstition beneath which the larger portion of the religious Catholic world were sunk in Italy. It was into this chaos of divergent influences, this strange medley of new beliefs arising from the ashes of the old, fast dying away or even already dead, that Giordano Bruno, one of the most impressionable of men, was born.

Now let us take a rapid glance at the events closely succeeding Bruno's birth, in order to realize more completely the exact position he fills in the history of philosophical thought. In 1561, thirteen years after his own birth, was born Lord Bacon, the founder of the inductive philosophy. Three years later Galileo, a full believer, though a somewhat timid supporter, of the Copernican system. Ten years later than Galileo, John Kepler, the discoverer of the three laws that bear his name, was born. In 1564 our great English dramatist, Shakspeare.* In 1632 Benedict Spinoza, and in 1646 Leibnitz. With all these writers Bruno had points in common, and if the influence he exercised upon them was not in every case direct, its indirectness must not make us lose sight of its significance. Nature is a supreme plagiarist, and the thoughts of such few among her sons as are really great she echoes and re-echoes, arraying them in various dresses, sometimes in veritable disguises, heedless, apparently, whether the name of their originator survive, so long only as the thoughts themselves shall live. So far as I know, Kepler was the only writer among those I have

* By some German writers Shakspeare has been considered to be largely indebted to Bruno, alike for several of his metaphors and for some few of his scientific allusions.

enumerated who confessed his indebtedness to Bruno, and he only in private correspondence. But with each of the others, especially Spinoza and Leibnitz, the resemblance is too great to be accidental, though it is quite possible the imitation was unconscious. One man soweth, another reapeth, and the seed expands and grows till it ceases to be recognizable in the fulness of the blossom; while in their gratitude for the latter men are apt to forget the greater importance of the former.

Giordano Bruno was born, as I have said, in 1548, his father's profession being that of a soldier. His baptismal name was Filippo, but he exchanged it for the one by which he is now known—Giordano—when he entered the Dominican Convent at Naples in his fifteenth year, the very same convent where some three hundred years previously the angelic doctor, Aquinas, had lived and studied. The Dominicans had a reputation for learning. Bruno, from a young child, had a passion for knowledge, and he tells us himself that he selected the Dominican order in preference to others because he thought that in it this passion would have greater chance of gratification. Unhappily for him his love for knowledge grew by what it fed on. He could not content himself with the answers given to his inquiries by the monks, and from his eighteenth year doubts, especially upon the subject of the Trinity, grew upon him. Yet he so far controlled these doubts that he seems to have spent thirteen years of his life in monastic seclusion, without any strong desire to leave. The seclusion was of a modified description; the Dominicans, or preaching brothers as they were called,

being in the habit of constantly travelling about in pursuit of their religious duties. Bruno's published writings show that his religious duties must have at least allowed him sufficient leisure to acquaint himself very widely with the Oriental and European writers of philosophy. In this convent he probably wrote his two earliest works, *i.e.*, *The Candle-bearer* and *Noah's Ark*. The latter work has disappeared; the former stands first in Wagner's Leipsic edition of his Italian works; and within the limits of this paper I intend to confine myself to an analysis only of such of Bruno's works as are published in Italian.

Il Candelaiio, or *Candle-bearer*, is a slight comedy written in the taste of the period, in which Bruno satirizes Love, Alchemy, and Pedantry. It is not worthy of his later works, but it is interesting to students as a proof of the antagonism he was already beginning to feel, at that early age, towards the superstitions and pedantries of his contemporaries. The thirteen years spent by Bruno under monastic discipline had been by no means years of uninterrupted peace for him. Doubts of various kinds increased upon him, and the petty tyranny and love of small authority exhibited by monastic officials galled him, and made him inwardly rebellious. Twice he received reprimands for some slight breach of discipline. On a third occasion the reprimand was so much more serious that, fearing he might be cast into prison, he deemed it wise to take the precaution of escape. He sought refuge in a convent at Rome belonging to his order; but finding that the suit against him was renewed and followed

him to Rome, he took, in 1576, the serious step of casting off his habit and abandoning the religious life. Taught by experience to dread discovery he resumed his baptismal name of Filippo, and from this time forward we find him passing now under one name and now under another. He wandered about for some days till he arrived at Genoa, where he made a brief sojourn; thence to Noli, Savona, Piedmont, Turin, and other towns and cities of Italy, always supporting himself by teaching. In 1579 he found himself at Geneva, where he sought employment as a corrector of proofs in one of the printing houses, and seems to have fallen into some ill-favour with the University of Geneva for having called the ministers of the Church *pedagogues*. We next find him at Lyons and Toulouse, and thence, in 1581, he travelled northwards to Paris. Here he met with better treatment than had previously been his lot. He was made "Professor Extraordinary," and became on terms of warm friendship with Henry III. Three books on the Art of Raymond Lully he published during this French sojourn. The *Candle-bearer*, though probably written so many years earlier, he also now published.

In 1583 Bruno went to England, and the two years he spent there seem to have been the happiest years of his adult life. He lived in the house of Castelnau de Mauvissière, and dedicated four of his works to him. Fulke Greville, Philip Sidney, and other men of learning and knightly worth were among his friends. In June of this year he was allowed to hold a public disputation before the Chancellor of Oxford upon the

Copernican theory, but apparently there was little agreement between him and his audience; and he records with some bitterness that he hardly knows which ought to be condemned the most, the beer-drinking propensities of the undergraduates, or the hopeless pedantry of their seniors.

The *Cena delle Ceneri* (Supper of Ashes), or Evening Conversations on Ash-Wednesday, stands second in Wagner's edition of Bruno's Italian works, and is the first bearing a dedication to the French Ambassador, Castelnau de Mauvissière. It consists of five dialogues between Smitho, an Englishman; Teofilo, a philosopher (presumably Bruno himself); Prudentio, a pedant; and Frulla, a character introduced probably for diversion, whose chief employment consists in making jests that are more or less unseemly. These dialogues are concerned principally with two subjects: a lively description of his life in London, and an investigation into the Copernican theory, which Bruno cannot help feeling is strangely divergent from the Mosaic account of Creation. He is careful to point out, however, that the philosophy of Copernicus is favoured in many passages of the Book of Job, for which book he had an immense admiration, describing it in his fourth dialogue as "one of the most singular that can be read, full of all good theology, physics and morality, abounding with wisest discourses, which Moses added as a sacrament to the book of his Laws."

It is in the *Cena delle Ceneri* that Bruno first displays his true attitude towards Aristotelianism, and more especially towards that Scholasticism which

while sheltering itself under the name of Aristotle totally ignored the true method of the master himself. To understand Bruno's denunciation of Aristotelianism we must remember that under the influence of Scholasticism the great Stagirite had been endowed with an infallibility that he would assuredly not have claimed for himself. The test of any new doctrine, any scientific discovery, was held to be found not in experiment or in argument, but in the support that it might or might not receive from the works of Aristotle; nay, the mere omission of reference in Aristotle to any subject was considered sufficient negative proof to condemn it, or at least to exclude it from all further investigation. And Bruno seemed at times to be excited to an absolute hatred of a philosophical bigotry and intolerance that threatened to impede all further knowledge as much as religious intolerance itself. There is an anecdote told, for instance, of a certain student, who having detected spots on the sun, communicated his discovery to a priest. "My son," replied the priest, "I have read Aristotle many times, and I can assure you that there is nothing of the kind mentioned by him. Go in peace and learn to convince yourself that the spots which you have seen are in your own eyes and not in the sun." This pseudo-Aristotelianism served indeed as a convenient cloak to religious bigotry, for its scientific support was chiefly claimed as a verification of the Mosaic account of Creation. Bruno had no wish unduly to decry Aristotle; but he did not disguise his opinion that reverence for him, and

indeed for all authority, considered as mere authority, carried to a superstitious extent, must be a hindrance to all true progress; and in this "Cena," endeavouring to relegate Aristotle to his true place in the history of thought, Bruno pointed to a fact that even now is hardly sufficiently recognized, viz., that what are called the *olden* ages, the *ancient* times, are in reality the *early* ages, the *youthful* times, and conversely that what are spoken of as the recent and modern times are in reality the older. The world, for instance, now well nigh on its twentieth century, is older by more than four hundred years than when Bruno pointed out this great truth, and he was led to the statement because he had been rebuked for his presumption in venturing to question the authority of one who had lived so many years earlier than himself as Aristotle; the inference drawn being that because Aristotle had lived so many years earlier, therefore must his opinion be of proportionately greater value. Bruno rightly perceived that the exact converse of this was the case; and though some of his works, taken as a whole, are finer than the *Cena delle Ceneri*, I doubt whether any of them contain a truth of greater value than where he thus relegates authority to its rightful place.

The *Della Causa, Principio ed Uno* is a sort of continuation of, or at all events has a certain connection with, the *Cena delle Ceneri*. The scene is still laid in England, and Teofilo again forms the chief among the *dramatis personæ*. Smitho's place is filled by *Dicsono Arelio*, the pedant is called Poliinnio, while *Gervasio* is

substituted for Frulla. It is dedicated to "Michel di Castelnau, Signor di Mauvissiero," the distinguished French Ambassador to England, Castelnau de la Mauvissière. At the conclusion of the Dedication are printed the two following exquisite sonnets in praise of spiritual love, called—

DE L' AMORE.

Amor, per cui tant' alto il ver discerno,
 Ch' apre le porte di diamante e nere,
 Per gli occhi entra il mio nume, e per vedere
 Nasce, vive, si nutre, ha regno eterno,
 Fa scorgere, quant ha il ciel, terra et inferno,
 Fa presenti d' assenti effigie vere,
 Ripiglia forze, e trando dritto fere,
 E impiaga sempre il cor, scopre ogn' interno.
 Oh dunque, volgo vile, al vero attendi,
 Porgi l' orecchio al mio dir non fallace,
 Apri, apri, se puoi, gli occhi, insano e bieco !
 Fanciullo il credi, per che poco intendi ;
 Per che ratto ti cangi, ei par fugace ;
 Per esser orbo tu, lo chiami cieco !

Causa, Principio ed Uno Sempiterno,
 Onde l' esser, la vita, il moto pende,
 E a lungo, a largo, e profondo si stende,
 Quanto si dici in ciel, terra et inferno !
 Con senso, con ragion, con mente scerno,
 Ch' atto, misura e conto non comprende
 Quel vigor, mole, e numero, che tende
 Oltr' ogn' inferior, mezzo, e superno.
 Cieco error, tempo avaro, ria fortuna,
 Sorda invidia, vil rabbia, iniquo zelo,
 Crudo cor, empio ingegno, strano ardire
 Non basteranno a farmi l' aria bruna,
 Non mi porrann' avanti gli occhi il velo,
 Non faran mai, ch' il mio bel sol non mire.

It is in the *Della Causa, Principio ed Uno* that Bruno's relationship to Spinoza is best to be seen.

What is the Efficient Cause? asks Dicsono.

I affirm, answers Teofilo, "the physical universal efficient to be the Universal Intellect. This is that One which fills the great whole, which illuminates the Universe, which directs Nature to produce its species in the way which is most suitable. This I understand to be the One in all things which produces diverse configurations and works out divers faculties."

"Will you distinguish what you mean by *extrinsic* cause and *intrinsic* cause?" asks Dicsono.

And in reply Teofilo defines his *causa intrinseca* and *causa estrinseca* very much as Spinoza his *natura naturans* and *natura naturata*, nature acting and nature acted on. Or to use more modern phraseology, both would affirm the One Sole Cause and Principle of things to be the *noumenon*, of which the multifiform modes of existence we see around us are but *phenomena*. The whole of the *Della Causa* is worthy of careful reading, but the Fifth Dialogue especially so.

Yet the work most necessary for us to study in order to comprehend Bruno's exact place in modern science and philosophy is his *De l' Infinito Universo e Mondi*; and it is to an analysis of this work therefore that I purpose to devote most space.

We must bear in mind that in the latter half of the sixteenth century the Copernican theory was still in the freshness of novelty, and that it had come upon Bruno as a sort of revelation. It had more than a scientific value for him, though he would have been

the last to under-estimate its scientific importance. But he was of a keenly imaginative bent, possessing that kind of imagination — what Wordsworth calls "The vision and the faculty divine" — which achieves discoveries by a sort of creative power. He pondered and brooded over this new revelation, this revulsion of thought which relegated the earth from her position of sovereignty to that of helpless submission, from the place of ruler to ruled, till he seemed penetrated by it. He examined it in all its bearings, gathering with each examination increased consciousness of its importance, till suddenly, and as it were by a leap, its full significance burst upon him. What if this solar system of ours was but one system among myriads? What if the position our earth fills toward the sun was but the same as that sun himself fills in a still larger system? As with the Copernican theory this new conception had for him more than a scientific value. It came as a sort of religion to his poetic, impressionable soul, filling him with that mysterious consciousness of the Infinite as sublime as it is bewildering; and from henceforth Bruno became the apostle of the Sidereal System. If the modern conception of the solar system rightly bears the name of "*Copernican*," no less rightly, it seems to me, should the modern conception of the sidereal system bear the name of *Brunonean*, or possibly as Bruno would have preferred the nomenclature, the *Nolan* theory. Yet, owing to some strange irony of fate, Copernicus, — dying peaceably in his bed at an advanced age, unconscious, it is true, of his own future greatness, yet suffering few of the penalties of

greatness,—has been long associated with a distinctly new epoch in astronomical discovery. Bruno, on the contrary, who paid the penalty of his greatness by a long imprisonment and a cruel death, has been until lately almost ignored, and even now we rarely find him mentioned in any history of modern astronomy. Yet as much greater as is the discovery of the sidereal system than that of the solar system, so much greater, it seems to me, should Bruno be considered than Copernicus.

Yet Bruno, while possessed with a longing almost unsurpassed to penetrate the Mystery of the Universe that presses upon most thoughtful minds, was comparatively but little oppressed with what the Germans have called *welt-schmerz*, i.e., *world-sorrow*, or that consciousness of the burden and mystery of human suffering which has afflicted so many thinkers, from the writer of Ecclesiastes to Schopenhauer and Leopardi. And in this, as in other ways, he shows himself to be a child of his own period. In the sixteenth century man himself had not come to be regarded as the proper study of man; but rather the place on which he dwelt, its relationship to the sun, and, finally, the position filled by it in space. Consequently it was the Infinite Glory of the Universe that filled the mind of Bruno; the consideration of the Majesty and Omniscience of the One Sole Cause of all things that animated him till he was raised, as it were, above the contemplation of earthly things, and seemed hardly in touch with humanity. Whenever he did descend from this high pedestal it was

in a mood that was sligher and altogether less worthy. The pedantries and stupidities of his contemporaries were derided by him with light banter, sometimes with scathing satire, but too often couched in language according with the coarse taste of the day. All his nobler, all his more fervent thoughts, were given to the contemplation of things celestial. In this wise he fully deserved with Spinoza the name of *God-intoxicated*. The Whence and How of the Cosmos in all its unrealizable grandeur penetrated him with a sort of irresistible fascination; but the Why and Wherefore of Sin and Misery but little disturbed him.

Nor does he seem to have asked himself how the superstitions he so contemptuously derided should have been allowed to take root and flourish. This is the more noticeable because Bruno was no ascetic, still less cynical or morose. He was bright-hearted and, I should judge, eminently lovable; at once grateful for kindness and appreciative of goodness, and therefore, to a certain extent, must have belonged to that order of mind called *sympathetic*. Yet that indignation against wrong-doing, that yearning and compassion called out by suffering, almost inseparable from sympathetic natures, he seems to have felt but little. And the interpretation, I think, is that he gave to humanity but his passing moods; to Divine Wisdom his soul and passion. I use the word *passion* advisedly, because Bruno was very fond of comparing his passion for Wisdom with that of the lover's yearning for his mistress.

The *Infinito, Universo e Mondi* was dedicated to Castelnau in a somewhat lengthy preface, descriptive of his book, which has been translated by Toland; though of the work itself, so far as I am aware, there is no English translation as yet.

Bruno commences his preface by complaining of the treatment bestowed upon him for his devotion to the study of Nature, for the contempt he feels towards popular authority, and for his love towards "one particular lady. It is for her that I am free in servitude, content in pain, rich in necessity, and alive in death. Hence it is even from my passion for this beauty that as being weary I draw not back my feet from the difficult road, nor as bewildered divert my gaze from the divine object. . . . If I err I am far from thinking I do, and whether I speak or write I dispute not for victory (for I look upon all reputation and conquest to be hateful to God, to be vile and dishonourable without truth); but it is for the love of true Wisdom, and by the studious admiration of this mistress that I fatigue and torment myself." Then, after describing the leading arguments in his book, he breaks forth into a rapturous eulogy upon the new point of view it presents to the reader, comparing it with the old received notion of the position of the earth thus:—"This is that philosophy which opens the senses, which enlarges the understanding, and satisfies the mind. Look to it now, gentlemen astrologers, with your humble servants, the natural philosophers, and see to what use you can put your circles that are described by the

imaginary nine moveable spheres, in which you so imprison your brains that you seem to me like so many parrots in their cages, hopping and dancing from one perch to another, yet always winding and turning within the same wires. But be it known unto you that so great an emperor hath not so narrow a palace, or so low a tribunal, but rather an infinite representation of an infinite original, and a spectacle befitting the excellency and eminence of Him that can neither be imagined nor conceived nor comprehended. Thus the excellency of God is magnified and the grandeur of His empire made manifest, since He is glorified not in one, but in numberless suns; not in one earth or world, but in ten hundred thousand, in infinite globes."

The conclusion of this dedication shows Bruno to be fully conscious of the importance of his work, and of himself as its writer, notwithstanding the little recognition he has as yet received, and he bids Castelnau look upon him as one "whom you are not to entertain among your domestics as having need of him, but as a person having need of you for so many and great purposes as you here see. Consider that for having such numbers at hand bound to serve you, you are thereby nothing different from farmers, bankers, or merchants; but that for having a man deserving to be by you encouraged, protected, and assisted, you are in reality (what you have always shown yourself to be) like unto magnanimous princes, heroes, and gods, who have ordained such as you for the defence of their friends." At the conclusion of

the dedication is to be found the following three beautiful sonnet verses:—

Mio passar solitario a quelle parti,
A quai drizzaste già l'alto pensiero,
Poggia infinito, poi che fia mestiero
A l'oggetto agguagliar l'industrie e l'arti.
Rinasci là ! là su voglio allevarti
Li tuoi vaghi pulcini, omai ch' il fero
Destin have ispedito il corso intiero
Contra l' impresa, onde solea ritrarti.
Vanne da me, chè più nobil ricetta
Bramo ti goda, e arai per guida un dio,
Che da chi nulla vede è cieco detto.
Il ciel ti scampi, e ti sia sempre pio
Ogni nume di questo ampio architetto ;
E non tornar a me, se non sei mio !

Uscito di prigionie angusta e nera,
Ove tanti anni error stretto m'avvinse,
Qua lascio la catena, che mi cinse
La man di mia nemica invida e fera.
Presentarmi a la notte fosca sera
Oltre non mi potrà ; per che chi vinse
Il gran Piton, e del suo sangue tinse
L'acque del mar, ha spinto mia Megara.
A te mi volgo e assorgo, alma mia voce ;
Ti ringrazio, mio sol, mia diva luce ;
Ti consacro il mio cor, eccelsa mano,
Che m'avocasti da quel graffio atroce,
Ch'a miglior stanze a me ti festi duce,
Ch' il cor attrito mi rendesti sano.

E chi m'impenna, e chi mi scalda il core ?
Chi non mi fa temer fortuna o morte ?
Chi le catene ruppe e quelle porte,
Onde rari son sciolti, et escon fore ?
L'etadi, gli anni, i mesi, i giorni, e l'ore,
Figlie et armi del tempo, e quella corte,
A cui nè ferro nè diamante è forte,
Assicurato m'han dal suo furore.

Quindi l'ale si cure a l'aria porgo,
Nè temo intoppo di cristallo, o vetro,
Ma fendo i cieli, e a l'infinito m'ergo,
E mentre del mio globo a gli altri sorgo,
E per l'etereo campo oltre penetro,
Quel ch'altri lungi vede, lascio al tergo.

The *Infinito, Universo e Mondi* consists of Five Dialogues, the *dramatis personæ* being *Elpino*, an upholder of Aristotle's opinions; *Fileteo*, occasionally called *Teofilo*, evidently Bruno himself; and two minor personages, introduced more or less for the sake of diversion. In the Fifth Dialogue a new character is introduced, who is called *Albertino*, and who is represented as one having sufficient ability and freedom from prejudice to understand the new conception of the Universe, notwithstanding that by education he is an Aristotelian.

The First Dialogue is chiefly devoted to a dissertation on the unreliability of the senses, Bruno asserting that it is only by careful comparison of one object with another that even a proximate knowledge can be attained. From this he proceeds to the question of the Infinity of the Universe; and in clear, concise language, almost worthy of Herbert Spencer himself, shows what Mr. Spencer has so ably demonstrated in his *First Principles*, that a Finite Universe is a contradiction in terms. By no manner of possibility are we able to conceive the Universe bounded by nothing. It is true that to our finite intellect an Infinite Universe is also incapable of clear presentation to our thoughts, but the difference

between these two difficulties is one not of degree but of kind. The one difficulty is simply that the Finite cannot grasp the Infinite; the other involves what any Finite mind, if he will but rightly consider, must see to be a glaring contradiction in itself. Finite means "bounded," and "bounded" implies "bounded by something," and by no possibility can we conceive space bounded, for that by which space is bounded must itself be in space. In clear, precise language Bruno shows that we are perfectly able to conceive finite globes but not finite space. "Io dico l'universo tutto infinito, per che non ha margine, termine, nè superficie; dico, l'universo non essere totalmente infinito, per che ciascuna parte, che di quello possiamo prendere, è finita, e de 'mondi innumerabili, che contiene, ciascuno è finito. Io dico Dio tutto infinito, per che da sè esclude ogni termine, e ogni suo attributo è Uno et Infinito; e dico Dio totalmente infinito, per che tutto lui è in tutto il mondo et in ciascuna sua parte infinitamente e totalmente: al contrario de l'infinità de l'universo, la quale è totalmente in tutto, e non in queste parti; se pur, riferendosi a l'infinito, possono esse chiamate parti, che noi possiamo comprendere in quello." From the consideration of an Infinite Universe Bruno proceeds to the scientific conception of Infinite Motion. Each world, he maintains, to be in unceasing motion; this motion is intrinsic, and proceeds from no external pressure; yet he thinks that there must be an Infinite Power acting throughout the entire Universe at once both "intensively and extensively."

The same subject is continued in the Second Dialogue, and very many of the same arguments; but Bruno imports into this dialogue a discussion upon the proofs of the Infinity of the Universe afforded by Gravity and Levity, Elpino repeating all the arguments of Aristotle, while Fileteo examines and refutes them.

The Third Dialogue deals with the shape and figure of the spheres, and the number and diversity of the Heavens, Bruno declaring that so far from "Heaven" being one, there are an infinite number of "heavens," taking that word in its usual signification; for as this Earth has its heaven, which is that region of space wherein it moves and performs its course, so has each and every other of the innumerable worlds in the Universe its own particular heaven. In one sense only can we affirm Heaven to be one, and that is as being the general space which contains infinite worlds.

Then he shows that every star has its own particular motion. He explains the difference between stars or suns and planets, and shows that the former have Light in themselves and the latter but reflected light. He examines also the doctrine of Cusanus about the probability of these other worlds being inhabited, inclining to such a belief himself.

The Fourth Dialogue repeats what has been said in former dialogues as to the infinity of worlds, their formation and motion; and a fuller explanation is given of gravity and levity. How thoroughly Bruno grasped and realized the office—so omnipresent and

unceasing—that Gravity fills throughout the entire Universe, from the hugest system of stars to the smallest object, is shown by his apt illustration of a stone, which, he argues, were it placed between two worlds of equal sizes, and at an exactly similar distance from each, would remain motionless, being equally balanced in space by the gravity that in equal proportion belongs to each world. He shows that there are worlds of all sizes, and systems of various degrees of complexity; that the Universe has “no margin, no extremity”; and that, therefore, though each globe has its own centre and has a relation to the common centre of the whole, we cannot discover a centre in a Universe which is Infinite. Indeed, he might with perfect justice in support of his position have described his conception of the Universe in that fine phrase familiar to most of us as “having its circumference nowhere and its centre everywhere.” In this dialogue also he slightly touches upon the nature of comets, which he seems to think have a certain resemblance to the planets.

The Fifth Dialogue is principally devoted to twelve objections which Albertino, the new interlocutor, brings to Bruno’s doctrine of the plurality of worlds. Bruno’s conviction of the greater sublimity of his own conception of the Cosmos is best to be seen in the Preface to *L’Infinito Universo e Mondi*, to which I have already alluded. I will quote the following passages from it, because they will serve to show not only his ardour and enthusiasm for this new conception, but also the singular extent to which he

seemed elevated by it from all touch with human hopes and fears:—

“These are the doubts and motives, the solution of which I have said enough to expose the intricate and radical errors of the common philosophy, and to show the weight and importance of our own. Here you will learn the reasons why we should not fear that any part of this Universe should fall or fly off, that the least particle should be lost in empty space, or be truly annihilated. Here you will find the reason of the vicissitude and mutation of all things, whereby nothing is really ill that befalls us from which we may not escape, nor good to which we cannot run, since in this infinite field, in spite of this constant mutation, the substance itself remains ever the same. From this contemplation, if we will but duly observe, it will follow that no unexpected accident, whether of grief or pain, should disturb us, nor any hope or good fortune unduly elate us, whence we shall have the true way to perfect morality, and thus may become great enough to be able to despise such things as are greatly esteemed by men of small or childish minds, and be able to work out for ourselves the divine laws engraven upon our hearts. For we shall know that it is no more difficult to fly from hence up to heaven than to fly from heaven back again to earth, since ascending thither and descending hither are all one. For we are no more surrounded by other globes than they are by our globe, nor are they more central to us than we to them; neither do they press upon the stars more

than we, as they no less than we are comprehended by the same sky. Behold us, then, free from envy! behold us delivered from the vain anxiety and foolish care of desiring to enjoy that good afar off, which we may possess close at hand and near! Behold us freed from that greater terror that they should fall upon us any more than we should hope that we might fall upon them, since our globe, like the others, is sustained by the same Infinite Ether (*aria*); thus this our animal (*animale**) freely runs through that part of space confined to his own region, as the other planets do to theirs. Did we but consider and comprehend all this, oh, to what greater consideration and comprehension might we not be carried, since by means of this science we should be sure to obtain that happiness which in other sciences is sought after in vain."

"This is that Philosophy . . . which leads man to the only true beatitude possible to him as man; for it delivers him from solicitous pursuit of pleasure and blind dread of misery, bidding him enjoy the present, neither to dread nor to look forward with hope to the future; since that same Providence or Fate or Fortune, which causes all vicissitudes that befall us, will let us know no more of the one than of the other, though at first sight it is natural to feel doubtful and perplexed; but if we will consider carefully the substance and being of that into which we are mutable, we shall find that there is

* Bruno frequently describes worlds as if he considered them to be animated beings; the larger he calls *divinities*, the smaller *animals*.

no death attending us nor any other real substance, since nothing is substantially diminished, but everything as it courses through infinite space simply changes its form. Thus everything being subjected to a good and most efficient cause, we should believe and hope that as everything proceeds from good, so must the whole be good, and for a good purpose. The contrary appears only to those who apprehend but the present, as the beauty of an edifice is not manifest to one that sees but a small portion, as a stone, or plastering, or part of a wall; but appears great to him who sees the whole, and has leisure to make himself familiar with every part. We fear not, therefore, that what is accumulated in this world by the vehemence of some wandering spirit, or the wrath of some thundering Jove, should be dispersed from this tomb or cupola of the sky, or be dissolved into powder beyond the starry firmament; nor that the nature of things can otherwise come to be annihilated in substance than, as it seems to our eyes, that the air contained in the cavity of a bubble becomes nothing when it bursts; because we know that in a world in which everything succeeds another there is no profoundest depth into which, as by the hand of an artificer, things are dissolved irreparably into nothing. There are no ends, limits, margins, or walls that defraud or subtract the infinite abundance of things. Thus the earth is fertile and so is the sea; thus the perpetual brightness of the sun, eternal fuel sustaining those devouring fires, and moisture the exhausted seas from the infinite and ever renewed

sustaining matter. Thus Democritus and Epicurus, who asserted the infinity of things, renewing and restoring, were nearer to a right conception than those who imagine the reverse."

I have dwelt at some length upon the *Infinito, Universo e Mondi*, because of all Bruno's Italian works it best shows how far he anticipated modern science. The Latin works *De Mimino, De Monade, De Immenso* are substantially a reproduction of *Della Causa* and *Dell' Infinito*, not merely repeating the same philosophical and scientific conceptions, but portraying the same condition of mind to which I have already alluded: an intense mystical rapture which raises him entirely above fear of death or earthly misfortune, and makes us feel that the subjective happiness within him must almost have atoned for the strokes of his untoward fortune. His relationship to Leibnitz is best seen in his work *De Monade*.

We need not dwell at any length upon the two works of Bruno next in order in Wagner's edition, the *Spaccio de la Bestia Trionfante* and the *Cabala del Cavallo Pegaseo*, the first of which is a somewhat heavy allegory written in the style of the period. It is dedicated to Sidney, and satirizes the various vices of the day under the guise of astronomical personifications. The *Cavallo* satirizes that piety which refuses all honest enquiry and original investigation, and consequently grows to be but another name for "asinine" stupidity. To the *Cavallo* is added as a sort of continuation a very short work of only five pages, called *Asino Cillenico*; indeed the "ass" as a repre-

sentation of human stupidity was a favourite metaphor with Bruno, and meets us in many of his works. The next and last work in Wagner's edition is that called *Gli Eroici Furori*, a work of much beauty, and interesting to us not so much for any philosophical or scientific conception it puts forth, but rather as an autobiographical revelation descriptive of that mystical rapture to which I have already alluded.

The *Eroici Furori* is dedicated to Philip Sidney in a somewhat lengthy preface, in which Bruno draws a comparison between the attractions of sensual love and those of the divine muse which enchains himself. At the end of the preface, as if moved by some compunction lest he may have spoken too contemptuously of women, there is a sonnet written in praise of the beautiful and virtuous women he met with while in England.

The work itself is in two parts, each part being divided into five dialogues. It is freely interspersed with numerous sonnets, opening with one invoking his muse to come to his aid and inspire him with all high thoughts. Many of these sonnets are of extreme beauty. *Eroici Furori*, or Heroic Love, really means with Bruno an intense longing for Divine Wisdom and love for spiritual beauty. And it is impossible to read the sonnets of which this work is so largely composed without apprehending the sublime inward vision by which he is inspired. He conceives himself freed from the trammels of the flesh, unclogged even by the power of gravity, breasting the air at will, bounding through space from world to world, from system to

system, gaining with each progress fuller knowledge of the One Sole Cause of All. For if Infinite Space is illimitable, Infinite Being must surely be without limits also. His religious standpoint, therefore, was distinctly Pantheism. It is sometimes said that there is but a step between Atheism and Pantheism; and logically perhaps this is so. But emotionally the difference is immense, and religious feeling pertains to the emotion. The Atheist believes that there is no god but nature; the Pantheist conceives the whole of nature to be but a manifestation of God. No one can read this *Eroici Furori* without seeing that it is a work distinctly of religious aspiration. Nay, if we except such of his writing as are satires, we may describe all Bruno's works to be of this nature. His spiritual Ideal and divine Object receives, it is true, different names at different times:—Now she is "Sophia or Wisdom," now she is "our beloved lady," now "Mia diva"; but through all her various guises we are made to feel with Bruno himself that all these attempts at nomenclature are but provisional and inadequate descriptions of that which is beyond human conception, much less human definition.

I have sometimes thought that in their essential natures the poet Shelley has more in common with Bruno than any other writer with whom I am acquainted. In each there is the same spiritual exaltation, the same intensity of religious feeling, strangely contrasted with absence of belief in religious dogma; there is the same hatred of shams and hypocrisy; the same passionate ardour for truth;

there is even the same contempt for pedagogues and dislike to University life. But in Shelley was developed a far larger amount of feeling for the woes and sins of humanity, which makes him at once greater and lesser than Bruno. It made his teaching, too, iconoclastic and destructive, while that of Bruno was mainly constructive. Shelley warred against all religion, Bruno against the shams and make-believes of religion. Shelley hated both legal and religious restraint, all that interfered with the freedom and (as he thought) happiness of man. Bruno only wanted sufficient freedom to worship in his own way the Divine Mistress which enchained him, in the service of whom and for the proclamation of whose beauty he could be as iconoclastic as Shelley himself; and for her he was ready to sacrifice both life and liberty. But all religion that was honestly held, so long as it interfered not with a belief in the infinity of worlds, had nothing but consideration from him. He declares that though there is but one Truth, there are many ways leading to that one Truth. And consistently with this declaration he was on terms of warm affection with the Catholic Castelnau equally with the Protestant Sidney. He was one of the very few in his day capable of admiring persons of an alien religion, so long only as that religion was honestly held. Thus intellectually he dissented more from the Lutheran doctrine than any other because of the preference it professed for faith rather than works, declaring that such a doctrine partook of the nature of *Deform* rather than *Reform*; yet for the Lutherans, considered as a

body, he had much respect, simply because he could see that they were genuine in their beliefs. Thus, where Shelley would probably have held that religion was made for man and not man for religion, and that all religions were to be considered good only in so far as they made man better, Bruno held that the worship of the Infinite One should be a supreme object with man; and in his *Expulsion of the Triumphant Beast* he traces the resemblance there is in all religions, and shows that beneath superficial diversities the aim and object of all is essentially the same, viz., the contemplation and worship of the Ineffable. Thus the improvement of man was to Shelley what the adoration of God was to Bruno, and so far the aim of the two poets was radically different. Yet if we read their writings carefully we shall find, I think, that this difference lies not so much in the essential natures of the two men as in the different periods in which each was born. The *Zeit-Geist* of Bruno's day was the new revelation of the solar system and of the movement and position of the earth. Humanity, its rights and duties and privileges, filled the foremost place of thought in the time of Shelley, and it was natural that, living when he did, the woes and miseries of mankind should have pressed themselves upon him so acutely. Yet, in spite of this diversity of aim, I think we can scarcely read the works of the two poets consecutively and with care without perceiving the very real similarity there is between them. Let him who has just risen from a study of Bruno's *Infinito Universo e Mondi* begin the *Adonais* of Shelley, or his *Alastor*, and he will see that the

spiritual conception in each is almost identical. Or let him study the *Eroici Furori*, and fully realize Bruno's imaginative representation of himself, freed from all earthly trammels, breasting space and absorbed in the contemplation of the Infinite around him, and then read *Queen Mab*, whom Shelley represents as led by a fairy, or spirit, seated in a wondrous chariot which seemed to

"Lay through the abyss of an immense concave,
Radiant with million constellations, tinged
With shades of infinite colour,
And semi-circled with a belt
Flashing incessant meteors.

* * * *

"The magic car moved on,
Earth's distant orb appeared
The smallest light that twinkles in the heaven ;
Whilst round the chariot's way
Innumerable systems rolled,
And countless spheres diffused
An ever-varying glory.

* * * *

"Spirit of Nature ! here,
In this interminable wilderness
Of worlds, at whose immensity
Even soaring fancy staggers,
Here is thy fitting temple.
Yet not the lightest leaf
That quivers to the passing breeze
Is less instinct with thee ;
Yet not the meanest worm
That lurks in graves and fattens on the dead
Less shares thy eternal breath.
Spirit of Nature ! thou,
Imperishable as this glorious scene,
Here is thy fitting temple."

No one, I think, could read the works of the two poets, even superficially, without seeing the very real resemblance in the spirit pervading them; no one could read a little more deeply without perceiving also the difference engrafted on the similarity by the spirit of the time. It is enough for Bruno to hope that infinite worlds are filled with inhabitants capable of worshipping the Ineffable. Shelley dreads lest these inhabitants may suffer from the woes and tyrannies that afflict humanity.

I must return from this digression to that point where we last left off in our sketch of Bruno's travels.

In 1585 Bruno left England for a second visit to Paris, thence to Mayence, Marburg, and Wittenberg. He received better treatment in Wittenberg than in his other resting places, and consequently remained there two years. On March 8th, 1588, he pronounced a grateful valedictory oration before the University of Wittenberg, unfortunately too long for quotation here. From Wittenberg he went to Prague, thence to Helmstedt, where he met with a fate now almost habitual to him, viz., attracting warm admiration and favour from the reigning princes, while incurring virulence and hatred from the theologians and pedagogues. Boethius, the pastor of the Evangelical Church, solemnly excommunicated him.

Frankfort was Bruno's next resting place. It was the centre of the German book trade; and Italian booksellers, and indeed booksellers from various parts of Europe, attended the Easter and Michaelmas fairs held at Frankfort. Bruno would have liked to find a

lodging in the house of the great printer Wechel, but he was gradually becoming a noted character, and Wechel evidently feared to run the risk of sheltering him. Somewhat strangely he found ready admission in the convent of the Carmelites. It was here in Frankfort that Bruno sent his four Latin works, *On the Threefold Minimum*, *On the Monad*, *On Immensity*, and *On the Composition of Images, Signs, and Ideas*, to press. Early in 1591 Bruno suddenly left Frankfort and had the imprudence to revisit Italy. His country had always been warmly beloved by him, and he was probably only too glad to avail himself of a slight incident as an excuse for revisiting it. This incident was nothing more important than the fact that a book written by him, possibly a work alluding to the Art of Lully, had fallen into the hands of Ciotto, a somewhat eminent Venetian bookseller, who had shown it to a young Italian nobleman belonging to the distinguished family of the *Mocenigos*. Giovanni, or Zuane Mocenigo shared to a certain extent the love of learning common to his family, and probably possessed also the love of the marvellous and a leaning to the occult, so prevalent in his age. A glance at the book seems to have inspired him with the hope that Bruno would be able to impart to him much that he was desirous to learn, and Bruno received in consequence the flattering intimation that Mocenigo was anxious to become acquainted with him. Still, this little incident, though it probably formed an additional reason for Bruno's sudden departure from Frankfort, could scarcely have been the true cause, since he was eight months on his

road, staying at Zurich and Padua, before visiting Venice. From the moment that he entered Venice Fate was preparing his toils for him. He first took a lodging so as to instruct Mocenigo, though he still frequently returned to Padua in order to give private lectures to certain German students residing at the University. Then in March, 1592, he became an inmate of Mocenigo's house on the Grand Canal. From that time his fate was sealed. Mocenigo became at first disappointed and afterwards irritated that Bruno did not impart that occult knowledge so ardently desired by him; while Bruno very probably, with his known imprudence, did not disguise the contempt he felt towards the superstitions and pedantries of his age. Then Mocenigo, unable to divest himself of his preconceived assurance of Bruno's acquaintance with occult matters, threatened him with the Inquisition if he would not impart what Mocenigo still thought he was only keeping back from some motive of his own. Bruno answered contemptuously that he had no fear of the Inquisition; yet as he seemed to be giving no satisfaction to his patron, he was quite willing to pack up his things and leave.

While the unfortunate Neapolitan was preparing for his departure, his patron, probably dreading that Bruno might spread abroad more of his superstitious feelings than he cared to have made public, secretly betrayed him to the Inquisition. His denunciations are in the form of three letters too lengthy to be given here, but they will be found in Berti's *Documenti Intorno a Giordano*

Bruno,* and they are dated severally May 23rd, 25th, and 29th, 1592. In them Mocenigo accuses Bruno of being possessed of the devil, of being an enemy to Christ, and of various heretical and philosophical opinions, some of which he probably held, but the majority of which were undoubted perversions. Thus when he makes Bruno lament that the Church in these days does not deal with men as the apostles dealt, for they converted the people by preaching and good example, but now the Catholic Church takes men by violence and not by love, Mocenigo was probably quite accurate in his statement. Again, when he represents Bruno as holding the Catholic faith to be higher than all other forms of dogmatic beliefs, he is again probably correct. Bruno did not hold very strongly by any stated form of faith, thinking that a good life was of far more importance than any mere set of doctrines; yet he never entirely shook himself free from a certain affection towards the religion long endeared to him by ancestry and the environment of his childhood, unsparing though he was towards the hypocrisies of the religious world during his later life. But when Mocenigo represented Bruno as denouncing Christ as *un tristo*, a sorry or contemptible fellow, assuredly he accused him of opinions which he never uttered, and which he indignantly repudiated.

On May 24th Bruno was conveyed to the prisons of the Holy Office, and on the following day Mocenigo took his oath of confirmation before the Father Inquisitor.

* An English translation is given in the recent life of Bruno, by I. Frith, published in Trübner's Philosophical Series, pp. 262-265.

The trial at once began. Ciotto and another Venetian bookseller, Bertano, were both examined, the one on the 26th, the other on the 29th May. Both agreed in saying that Bruno had never uttered a word in their presence against Christianity or the Catholic Church. Then Bruno himself was examined, detailing at length the circumstances of his life. When asked the question, "What things are necessary to salvation?" he answered emphatically, "Faith, hope, and charity." Asked if he had any enemy, he replied bitterly, "My only enemy is Ser Giovanni Mocenigo, who threatened my life and my honour, and that continually." Yet it is probable that the various onslaughts made by Bruno upon pedagogues and theologians in different parts of Europe, together with his praise of various Lutheran sovereigns, may, unconsciously to himself, have brought him many enemies. On June 23rd, Andrea Morosini, the distinguished historian, was called upon to give his evidence. Bruno had been in the habit of attending his literary and political assemblies. Upon being asked his opinions of Bruno's religious beliefs, Morosini answered that in his hearing Bruno had never touched upon religion, and added that had he thought him other than a good Catholic he would never have permitted him to enter his assemblies.

Etiquette between Venice and Rome caused a certain delay in Bruno's trial, but on January 7th, 1593, he was officially delivered over to the Inquisition at Rome, and on February 27th entered those gloomy prisons in which the seven remaining years of his life were to be spent. From the beginning of 1593 to

the beginning of 1599 Bruno was kept in suspense from day to day, not knowing when sentence was to be delivered. It is difficult at first sight to account for a delay so unnecessary, and which must have added so greatly to his punishment, but probably indecision on the part of the Pope, and not pure cruelty, lay at the root of it. It was not easy for the Inquisition to point to any particular action or written opinion that would justify it in executing Bruno. Such satires and invectives as appeared in some of his less worthy writings, he was perfectly willing to recant, frankly regretting that he should have written them. All his nobler and more important works he declares, and with evident sincerity, to be free from the faintest imputation upon the Church.* But the Inquisition was probably more logical than Bruno in perceiving that if his opinions once found acceptance some of the most important doctrines of the Church would be in danger. Thus the Copernican doctrine, of which he was so fervent an apostle, was certainly against the Mosaic account of creation, though, as Bruno pointed out, it was favoured by the Book of Job. Again, his doctrine of the immutability of all things, their transformation, the unity that underlies variety, the majesty and harmony of eternal law, may, as he avers, find

* That Bruno had doubts upon some of the tenets of the Church, such as the doctrine of the Trinity, seems certain. But (to use his own words) when thus expressing himself, he wrote as a philosopher, not as a theologian, a mode of defence less alien to the conscience of that period than it would be to ours. In his nobler works, however, he seldom touched upon doctrinal matters.

support in the writer of Ecclesiastes; but they are certainly against miraculous interpositions and the intercession of saints. Yet it was indirectly, rather than directly, that the real danger of Bruno's works lay. Explicitly and implicitly he had attacked all superstitious worship of authority. And authority was the life-blood of the Church. He was no blatant iconoclast wishing to hew down all that was sacred with time. But he lived in an age when reverence for mere authority choked all higher reverence; when it acted as a putrefying influence, contaminating even innocuous things; while it rendered that which was essentially corrupt of tenfold greater corruption.

We who are living in an age which is reaping the fruits of Bruno's teaching can hardly realize how insidious and widespread was this worship of authority. Yet, in my opinion, his claim to be remembered by posterity lies not so much in the scientific discoveries he helped to effect, great as these were, as in his courage to proclaim them. He was one of the very few in his day to perceive that a question can only be judged on its own merits, and that it is impossible to arrive at those merits without free and untrammelled discussion. Yet it was just this freedom of discussion that the Church had always forbidden; and though she took seven years to arrive at the decision, she was probably only showing her customary astuteness in judging that Bruno's writings, innocent as the author himself sincerely judged them to be, must prove a source of real danger to her.

At intervals during the year 1599 attempts were

The "Tragedy" of Bernadino Ochino.

SIDE by side with the origin and mystery of his own existence—so soon as man has sufficiently developed to be able to think at all—has ever pressed upon him for interpretation the mystery and origin of the existence of Evil. Different nations have attempted different solutions, various ages various interpretations, the least unsatisfactory among these perhaps being the dualistic interpretation of Zoroaster, but which, strange to say, has found little favour save in its own birthplace—Persia. Amongst other effects this problem—like all great subjects powerfully affecting human imagination—has given rise to certain of the finer dramas—now in prose, now in verse—of human creation. The Book of Job, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Goethe's *Faust*, all deal with the great problem of Evil under one or other of its phases. The two first-named are known almost to all who can read the English tongue; while even the last, through its many admirable translations, is familiar to a large number of readers not yet sufficiently educated to be able to enjoy it in the original.

The subject of this paper, however—Ochino's *Tragedy*—is hardly known even by name save

to the professed student, and is of such extreme rarity that the authorities of the British Museum will not trust it to circulate in the General Reading-room. Yet the phase of evil investigated here touches man far and wide, and is of a nature much more terrible, much more incomprehensible, than the forms dealt with by the writer of the Book of Job, or by Milton, or Goethe. The phase of evil seized upon by Ochino for treatment in the *Tragedy* is Superstition—that insidious power which impels men to confuse evil with good; which affects the holy equally with the wicked—perhaps, indeed, more; which forces men of honesty of purpose, of religion, of humanity, to acts from which even savages—unless they, too, are intoxicated by some other form of the almost all-pervading power—shrink; impelling them to sacrifice their wives, their children, their parents; to rob, to torture, to betray, in obedience to some divine command purely of their own imagination; or because of some slight divergence in opinion but too often entirely incomprehensible. There is no form of evil so difficult to explain as this. As little can it be solved by modern science as by the doctrine of a Moral Providence. The sins of human nature in their simpler form we are learning to regard as only relative—as natural, almost inevitable, to man in his present stage of transition inherited from his animal ancestry. But how explain the mad impulse to torture those he loves best, to betray his own offspring, to seek death and brave torture himself—acts as alien from the healthy animal nature as from

the human being freed from the dominion of Superstition? How, indeed, save upon the hypothesis that there are verily devilish spirits around us striving to see what fools they can make of men in order

“to move the mighty laughter of the gods”?

It is this phase of sin—the evil that assumes the mask of virtue—that is the *motif* of the *Tragedy* before us. Ochino has limited his treatment of superstition to the terrible crimes committed under the dominion of the Papacy. I need scarcely say that all superstition—from that of Juggernaut to the Witchcraft of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—could lend itself to similar treatment.

To understand how the *Tragedy* came to be written we must devote a few lines to a brief description of its writer:—

Bernadino Ochino was born at Siena, a short distance from Florence, in the year 1487, just four years after the birth of Luther. He was of a strongly religious bent, and like most religious youths in that century felt powerfully drawn towards a monastic life. He selected that rule of the Friars of St. Francis, called the Observants, because it had the repute of exceptional severity; and in 1524 he attained the dignity of general of the Observants. Notwithstanding this distinction he was but little satisfied with his order. Self-indulgence had taken the place of the austerity which he had expected, and of discipline there was little. Longing to find a greater reality in his religious life, he determined

to throw aside the dignities he had attained in the rule of the Observants, and pass as a simple friar into the Order of the Capucin, professedly a rule of extreme austerity. In this order also Ochino soon rose to distinction. He was endowed with a great gift of oratory, almost rivalling the fame of Savonarola as a preacher, and in this character attracted the notice of the Emperor Charles V.

In the sixteenth century, however, the Church of Rome was almost at her lowest ebb. Intrinsically and extrinsically her power was weakened. From within she suffered the consequences of her own enormities, from without the attacks of the Reformers, as well as the results of the discoveries of Magellan and other scientific men. Ochino could find no resting-place in his new order. Yet his revolt was moral rather than intellectual. It was his gradually acquired knowledge of the shameless wickedness of Rome that drove him from the Church, not the contradictions in which her teaching was involved by the new discoveries of science. In 1542 he left Italy and went to Geneva. Here he seems to have adopted opinions more or less Lutheran, at times preaching justification by faith, and employing the language of extreme Evangelicalism, at others veering towards Socinianism, and teaching that not even Christ should be allowed to come between a man's soul and his God. Like Luther also, he took unto himself a wife. In 1547 he went to England, where he remained for six years, and where he wrote his *Tragedy*. From this time his fortunes were more or

less adverse, though exile and banishment from his various places of refuge seem to have been his worst form of persecution. Escaping all other torture, he died a natural death at the age of seventy-seven.

For our present purpose, however, it is solely as the author of the *Tragedy* that Ochino is of interest. He was no strongly original thinker, no founder of any new school of thought. He was only a pious, intensely conscientious soul, honestly loathing evil, strongly attracted to all that was good. In his own words, he had "not forsaken the Church, but only the impiety and superstition which falsely assumed for itself the title of Church.* The abominations openly practised by the Church of Rome first appalled him, then powerfully pressed upon him for some interpretation of their existence. He had never wavered for a moment in his belief in a Moral Providence. How then reconcile this belief with the successful wickedness around him? Like Luther and others of his time, he was a firm believer in the devil and all his angels. He was no conscious dualist, but the existence of the devil seemed to him as absolute a reality as the existence of God, and he would as soon have doubted of the one as the other. It is difficult at this distance of time fully to realize the entire belief in Satan and the hierarchy of angels held for the most part by men of all forms of Christian faith, and probably shared by one living so much later as Milton himself. Pondering upon the mystery of the

* KARL BENRATH'S *Life of Ochino*, translated by H. Zimmern, p. 129.

widespread wickedness of the religious world around him, Ochino was at last led to the solution sufficiently set forth in his *Tragedy*, a drama I am anxious to resuscitate from undeserved oblivion,* partly because of its own intrinsic interest, partly also because of the remarkable parallelism in connection between it and Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Though the *motif* of the two dramas is distinct—Milton seeking to account for the Fall of Man, while Ochino explains the rise and success of the Papacy—yet the general treatment of the *Tragedy*, the introduction of so many of the same *dramatis personæ*, present so striking a resemblance to *Paradise Lost* that it is almost impossible not to believe that Milton must have been acquainted with the work of the earlier writer. If he were not, the coincidence is so remarkable as to be almost unique. If, on the other hand, he were familiar with it, it would, I think, have been more graceful had he made some acknowledgment, and tried to bring the almost unknown drama before readers capable of appreciating it. He need have feared no rivalry. For though—on this hypothesis—the priority of *conception* belongs to Ochino, though the *motif* of the *Tragedy*—the mystery of the existence of Superstition—is, in the present writer's opinion, far subtler, far more original than that of *Paradise Lost*, basing the fall of man, as Milton does, upon the Biblical narrative, yet in the development and general

* So far as I am aware the only modern work dealing at any length with this drama is KARL BENRATH'S *Life of Ochino*, which has been translated by Miss Zimmern. Very recently Dr. Garnett, in his excellent *Life of Milton*, in the Great Writer Series, has sought, though necessarily somewhat briefly, to draw attention to the parallelism between the *Tragedy* and *Paradise Lost*.

treatment of the conception Ochino falls behind Milton. Though not without considerable dramatic power, the *Tragedy* is yet entirely lacking in the poetic imagery and splendid declamatory passages so familiar to all students of Milton's great epic.

The title of Ochino's drama runs as follows :—

"A Tragedie or Dialogue of the unjuste usurped primacie of the Bishop of Rome, and of all the just abolishing of the same made by Master Bernadino Ochino, an Italian, translated out of Latine into Englishe by Master John Ponet,* Doctor of Divinitie,

* John Ponet, the translator of Ochino's *Tragedy*, was himself in many ways a remarkable man. From the article devoted to him in *Chalmers' Biographical Dictionary* the following facts are taken :—John Ponet was born in Kent about the year 1516, and was educated in King's College, Cambridge, where he soon became distinguished for his learning. He was skilled not only in Latin and Greek, but—which was more unusual in those days—Italian and Dutch. In early life he proved himself an able mechanist, and constructed a clock which pointed to the hours of the day, the days of the month, the signs of the zodiac, the lunar variations, and the tides. It was presented to Henry VIII. and considered by him an extraordinary production. At what time Ponet imbibed the principles of the Reformation is uncertain. He was only in his thirty-third year when he was made Bishop of Rochester, being at the time chaplain to Archbishop Cranmer. The following year, 1551, he was translated to Winchester, on the deprivation of Gardiner, and was one of the bishops appointed to make a new code of ecclesiastical laws. He wrote several treatises in defence of the Reformation, but his most remarkable work is generally considered to be *King Edward's Catechism*, which appeared in two editions—one in Latin, the other in English—in 1558. When Mary came to the throne Ponet, with many others, retired to Strasburg, where he died April 11, 1556.

The article in *Chalmers' Biographical Dictionary*, from which I have taken the above extracts, is under the heading of *Poynet*, though the writer admits that "Ponet" may also be correct. On the title-page of the *Tragedy* itself, however, the translator's name is given as *Ponet*. Presumably, therefore, this mode of spelling is the correct.

never printed before in any language (Anno 1549)." With many laudatory expressions it is dedicated to "The moste myghtie and moste excellent Prince Edwarde the Syxte, by the Grace of God, Kynge of Englande, Fraunce, and Irelande, defender of the faith, and in earth Supreme head of the Church of Englande and Irelande, Bernadino Ochino Senensis wisheth all felicitie."

The *dramatis personæ* of the first scene are Lucifer, Beelzebub, and the Fallen Angels. Lucifer is the first to speak, and at the very outset of the drama the resemblance between Ochino's Lucifer and Milton's Satan forces itself upon the careful student of *Paradise Lost*. Most of my readers will remember how Milton makes Satan hail his audience as "Princes, potentates, warriors, the flower of heaven once yours, now lost," reminding them how they have been by

"The Almighty Power
Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamant chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms,"

and gradually unfolds to them his plan of revenge, seeking to inspire them with the courage never lacking in himself. In like manner Lucifer welcomes his hearers as "My dear faithful brethren and most entirely beloved friends," divulges to them his reasons for thus summoning them together in consultation, and reminds them of God's injustice in having hurled them from heaven, and of the miseries they have in con-

sequence endured. There is greater craftiness, I think, in Ochino's Lucifer than in Milton's Satan, more entire absence of all the elements of nobility which assuredly assert themselves at times in Milton's Rebel Angel. And this is as it should be. Milton has a nobler theme for his work. The craving for knowledge whereby men shall become as gods is at least not an ignoble craving, and Milton has rightly made the inspirer of such a craving not entirely ignoble himself. But the shrinking from knowledge, the condemnation of investigation, the worship of ignorance, the stultification of intellect, the marvellous perversion of conscience, whereby men shall gradually consecrate evil and shudder at good; how shall elements of nobility exist in the inspirer of a work so devilish as this? Not by rebellion, therefore, but by duplicity will Ochino's Lucifer seek to wrest the kingdom from Christ and make it his own. He reminds his hearers that before the coming of Christ they had been partly successful in revenging themselves upon God, but that now the Son of God was drawing all men unto Him; persecution seeming only to increase the number of His disciples, so that when they kill one Christian man "there springeth as it were out of the ashes of him a hundred immediately in his place. When we intende to bringe the kingdome of Christe to nothing, then we make it more noble, riche, and gloriouse."

Art and cunning may, however, bring that about which persecution has failed to effect. "I have conceived in my head a deceyt of suche weight and importaunce that if I maye bringe it aboute with

suche sort as I have devised it there was never any devised before for the strangeness and for the force thereof. I have devised within myself to make a certaine new kingdome, replenished with idolatry, supersticion, ignorance, error, falsehood, deceit, compulsion, extortion, treason, discorde, tyranny and cruelty, with spoylinge, murder, ambicion, filthiness, injuries, factions, sectes, wickedness and mischief, in the whiche kingdome all kinds of abomination shall be committed. And nothwithstanding that it shall be heaped up with all kinds of wickedness, yet shall the Christian men thinke that to be a spiritual kingdome most holy and most godly. The supreme head of this kingdome shall be a man which is not only sinfull and an abominable robber and thiefe, but he shall be synne and an abomination itself, and yet for all that shall be thought by Christian men a god upon earth, and his members being most wicked shall be thought of men most holy. God sent hys sonne into the worlde, who for the salvation of all mankinde hath humbled himself even to the death of the crosse; and I will sende my sonne into the worlde who for the destruction and condemnation of mankinde shall so announce hymself that he shall take upon hym to be made equal with God. Thys is our counsell and wittie invencion, and it is not to be doubted but that if the matter come to passe, as I would have it (as my trust is that it will), we shall in a short space see a revenging of that our old injury."

Beelzebub, while applauding the device of Lucifer, almost doubts its possibility of success. "Who could believe," he asks, "that the Christian name, which

excell in wisdom and judgement, could be brought to this point to believe that the Kyngdome of the Devil is the Kyngdome of God?" Then Lucifer exclaims, "O, how goodly occasions many tymes men lose, and how goodly enterprises come not to such effecte as they were purposed; for by the meanes of the weake fearfulness of men's stomaches in that they dare not take in hande whiche they be afraid they shall not achieve!" Lucifer answers that he will so blind men that the most hideous vices shall be consecrated under the name of virtues. "There shall be such horrible and wicked viciousness in thys kyngdome that the chief captains themselves could not abide them if they knew them to be so abominable as they shall be. Even as upon Christe dependeth the whole salvation of all mankynde, so is it necessary for us to devise a supreme head upon whom may depend the whole condemnation of all mankynde. And as the Son of God for the salvation of the world did abase himself from the highe state of His divinity, and endued Himself with man's nature, of a like sorte is it needful for the destruction of the worlde that there be some man which shall announce hymself above Christ and above God Himself, that men being blinded by the stinking and filthy superstition may feare, honour, and obey a mortal man more than the very living Lord. And, moreover, it is necessary that this man be so furnished with all wickedness and iniquity that I may worthily say of hym: 'This is my well-beloved son in whome is my onely delighte, heare hym,' even as the heavenly Father long agoe did testify of His Son Christe."

Beelzebub: "Methinketh that I heare the lively image of Antichrist hymselfe handsomely and properly described of you."

Lucifer: "It is even so indeed as thou sayest."

Beelzebub: "But who is, I pray you, so shameless as to receive so wicked a dignity?"

Lucifer answers that the dignity shall be set about with so many honours that all the princes of the earth will compete for it. Moreover, the wickedness shall be so covered over with a show of seeming holiness that those who accept of this dignity shall not be able to perceive its hidden wickedness. The insatiable ambition of Rome from the fact that it is the chief city in the world, makes its bishop, in Lucifer's opinion, the most ready tool; and lest profane learning may enlighten his followers and open their eyes to the wickedness to be brought about, Lucifer announces to Beelzebub his intention to cause all men to regard scientific study and knowledge of liberal arts as an abomination in the sight of God.

Beelzebub: "When I consider how shorte the life of man is it seemeth to me a thinge impossible that one byshop of Rome in so shorte a space should bring to passe so many mischiefes."

Lucifer: "Brother, methinketh that ye be very dull; for this name of Antichrist is not the proper name of any one an, but is a common name to many." Lucifer concludes the dialogue by exhorting each present to do his endeavour according to his calling, adding: "I, as your chiefe captaine, will first prove a foremoste attempte to persuade this godly imagination of mine

to Boniface, the Bishop of Rome, and I doubt not but that I shall obtain present favour of his carnal wisdom."

The next scene is occupied with a dialogue between Bishop Boniface and Dr. Sapience, Secretary to the Emperor, in which Boniface discloses his desire to be made head of Christendom. The subtle intermixture of secret ambition, mingled with religious self-delusion, gradually growing into acknowledged self-glorification and conscious hypocrisy, is portrayed in this scene with the hand of a master. The next scene is occupied with a discussion between two speakers, personifying the Church of Rome and People of Rome; the Church complaining that she has been ill both in body and mind since the Bishop was made Pope, yet evidently desirous that she shall be head of all the churches in Christendom. In the fourth scene the discussion is continued, but the *dramatis personæ* are the Pope, the People of Rome, and a third speaker, called "Man's Judgment." The Pope, while glorying in his new honours, expresses his annoyance that he has not the entire adherence of the Eastern Churches, and appeals to Man's Judgment for advice as how best this adherence may be brought about; to which Man's Judgment replies that the Pope has only to persuade men that he derives his authority from Christ Himself and perfect submission will certainly ensue; by this means also he will be able to shake himself free of the Emperor's favour. The Pope upon this naturally asks, How could men be persuaded to think this? Man's Judgment replies, "The foolishness of men is

grown so far now, accompanied with a wonderful deceit and wickednesse, and I am myselfe so subtile and craftie, that methinketh it is a thing easie to persuade ; yea, and that I nowe see the meanes how."

Man's Judgment then explains to him that as Peter was pronounced chief of the apostles by Christ and supreme head of His Church Militant, he will contrive that people shall believe that Peter visited Rome, was Bishop there, and died there. Already has he (Man's Judgment) prepared books detailing all these fables about Peter, and he will persuade men that these books, though only recently discovered, were in reality written over a thousand years ago. Moreover, "I gat me an old foul bone of a dead carcas, into which I have put a paper containinge these wordes, 'This is the Heade of Saynct Peter, First Pope of Rome.' Moreover I have compassed this head about with another head of silver, and have so framed it with a great bearde that it appeareth verily to be Saynct Peter's head." The Pope then inquires what will the Emperor say when it is noised about that it is Christ and not he that made him Pope? Man's Judgment replies that the Emperor need only be told that what Christ has ordained it is his province to confirm.

The fifth scene is the longest in the *Tragedy*, and consists of a dialogue between Thomas Massuccius, the master of the horse, and Lepidus, the Pope's chamberlain, in which the latter details certain controversies against the Pope's authority that have been indulged in by ambassadors from all parts of the world; the Pope, however, ending as complete con-

queror in the discussion, being finally described as "Holy Father, Supreme Head of the Church of Christe, above all men and angels, reasons, Holy Scriptures, authorities, yea, and above the whole world." In this scene an imaginary council is described, and constant interruptions take place from the Pope's advocate, who bears the appropriate name of *Falsidicus*.

In the sixth dialogue Lucifer and Beelzebub are again brought before us. The former commences by bidding the latter to rejoice with him over the success of their design. Beelzebub, while fully recognizing the fact of the success, is yet apprehensive that if the Pope should increase much more in wickedness he may excel even themselves. Lucifer, though acknowledging this danger, will hardly consent to be turned from his purpose, but exclaims exultingly that he will induce the Pope to such wickedness that he "shall adventure with his thievish fingers to corrupt the Holy Scriptures, he shall have authoritie to canonize saints, he shall be above all counsells, may dispense against justice, and may change God's definitive sentence. . . . Menne shall hear God blasphemed, and some deny the might of God, and yet shall all menne laughe and make a game thereat as though it were a triflyng matter; but if any manne shall attempte to deny the Pope's power, or to deminish the same never so little, he shall be burned alyve with long tormente. Moreover we will cause all the bokes to be burned, as many as shall seme to make anythinge against our Popehood. Yea, and we will forbid menne that they shall not have the Holy

Scriptures in their handes nor in their sighte under the paine of fyer and rope."

Beelzebub doubts whether men will ever be brought to this pass of folly and wickedness. Lucifer answers that everything that might open their eyes shall be forbidden them—literature, science, family affection, even innocent recreation and natural exercise. Beelzebub forthwith inquires with what occupations shall men amuse themselves, seeing that "it is a very painful thing to be always ydell."

Lucifer: "They shall not always be ydell, good sir, but shall have something and always in dysyng, cardynge, banketting, in wantoning, contencion, and suchlike courtly pastimes. . . . Good letters shall be banished, and so shal they lacke all good learning, insomuch that their children shall learn nothing else in their scholes save vaine and filthie tales." Moreover in place of true religion men shall worship dead men's bones; instead of spending their time in good works they shall recite long prayers to relics and to the honour of bad men whose memories have been consecrated by the Pope, all the while thinking that they are doing God service. This is how the naturally good shall be seduced. The naturally bad in their turn shall be rendered tenfold more bad because the Pope shall have power to give them dispensation to sin as freely as they like, and will doubtless liberally reward his followers on this wise.

Beelzebub: "All this geare pleaseth us very well, one thinge only excepted."

Lucifer: "What is that one thinge which pleaseth you not?"

Beelzebub: "Notwithstanding that there can be no greater abominacion committed than that ye have rehearsed, yet will he be nowe much worse than me. Wherefore I feare me lest when he shal dye and come down into hell that as he passeth us in wickednesse so will he be above us in dignitie."

Lucifer: "Know ye not that as Christe for hys humblenesse was announced above all the companies of angells, so also must Antichriste for hys pryde be announced above all the order of devils. We must take this service wel and worthie. And as for my parte, surely I would not stycke to lease my chief rule in hel of condition I might make my malice upon God. But I pray you suffer me to make an end of my matter."

Then Lucifer unfolds at greater detail his plan of confession, absolution, and the sale of indulgences. "Oh, howe many and howe abominable fantasies," he exclaims exultingly, "shal menne committe when they shal saye to themselves: What care I? Of this am I suer that I can be absolved for money. . . . Furthermore we will cause that this our mischievous parricide shal by his fraude and craft persuade Christian menne that Christe with al hys merites, passion, death, and benefites be not sufficient to save—I will not saye the reprovéd and rejected sorte, but even the very chosen of God—be it that they believe in Christe with never so lively a faithe. For they muste moreover of neces-sitie confesse all their sinnes both open and private, even the very inward thoughts and desires."

Beelzebub: "And how I praye you may we bring

it to passe that thys confession may be used among menne?"

Lucifer bids Beelzebub remember that in all men, stricken in their conscience, there is a yearning to unburden themselves to some other man whom they feel to be holier and wiser than themselves. This natural and, to a certain extent, wholesome feeling, Lucifer intends so to work upon, and by most gradual degrees intensify, that men shall at last come to believe that no sin can be remitted without absolution from the priest. Moreover, this confession shall not be merely voluntary; it shall grow to be compulsory. "These will be good and handsome beginnings to bring in by little and little our confession." Then Lucifer enters upon the subject of Masses and dispensations for sins, by which the Church will grow rich and the Pope more and more powerful. Men shall gradually come to believe that not only the guilty, but the innocent, desires of human nature may not be indulged in save by payment of money to the Church.

Beelzebub: "Thinke you that they will condemn marriage?"

Lucifer: "They shall saye it is a wicked thinge. And though it be agreeable to nature, ordained of God, confirmed of Christe, yet shall they forbyd it to theyr nonnes, monks, and priests. Yea, and at certaine times they shall forbyd it to all menne; and in certaine degrees that they themselves have devised, that by the meanes thereof they may get a great summe of money for dispensations. And at certaine tymes

they shal forbyd wholesome meat to be eaten, which God hath created to be used to his glory, and to be taken with thanksgiving. At certaine tymes of the year he shal not suffer them to eat but once in the daye. But all these thinges shal, notwithstanding, be dispensed to all for money. He shal make of thys sorte an infinite number of other precepts which, he wil saye, be necessary for salvation. . . . To comprehend this large matter in fewe wordes: I wil apply all the powers of my wytte that thys-creature of ours may doe much more hurt to the soules of menne than Christe hymself dyd good. And it is not to be doubted but that we wil make of this Church a very Babylon. Trewe it is that a thing of such holynes cannot be brought in a moment sodaynly to the highest degree of abominacion, wherefore in this noble myschief we must go forward by little and little, letting none occasion slip, nor opportunity of tyme that shall offer unto us. Nowe, therefore, shal you have my lycence to departe, requiring you to loose no tyme."

Beelzebub: "We wil doe your commandment."

With the close of this dialogue the originality and dramatic power of the *Tragedy* wanes a little. But the parallelism that I noticed at the beginning of this paper with Milton's *Paradise Lost* is further increased by the introduction in each drama of Christ and His angels. In both writers, too, it seems to me as they bring their dramas to a close, there is a latent, undefined, hardly acknowledged consciousness that, after all, their attempts to justify the ways of God to

men have not been wholly successful. In a splendid passage, familiar probably to most readers of this review, Adam, after having been shown by Michael the sinfulness and utter misery of his posterity, breaks forth into the passionate questioning—

“‘Why is life given
To be thus wrested from us? Rather why
Obtruded on us thus? Who, if we knew
What we receive, would either not accept
Life offered, or soon beg to lay it down,
Glad to be so dismissed in peace. Can thus
Th’ image of God in man, created once
So goodly and erect, though faulty since,
To such unsightly sufferings be debased
Under inhuman pains? Why should not man,
Retaining still divine similitude,
In part, from such deformities be free,
And for his Maker’s image sake exempt?’”

And though there is an attempt at explanation—

“‘Their Maker’s image,’ answered Michael, ‘then
Forsook them, when themselves they vilified
To serve ungoverned appetite.’”

it hardly requires the genius of a Milton to perceive that the question, “Whence their ungoverned appetite?” still remains to be asked and answered.

In like manner in Ochino’s *Tragedy*, when Christ confides to Michael and Gabriel his intention of raising up Henry VIII., and afterwards Edward VI., to wrench the Church from the authority of the Pope, Ochino makes the angel Michael ask the almost inevitable question: “We see altogether, and marvel truly very much how ye could suffer (now about four hundred years) such horrible abominations.”

And, notwithstanding that Ochino makes Christ answer with all orthodoxy, that they have been permitted for "His glory," and informs His angels that, "although the judgments of God be for the most part hid from the knowledge of human creatures, yet must they be taken to be, as they be indeed, righteous and holy," it is, I think, evident that to Ochino, as to all thinking persons, whatever their religion or philosophy, the origin and existence of evil is still a mystery to which as yet no adequate solution has been given.

The penultimate scene in the *Tragedy* introduces us to Henry VIII., Papista, and Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury. In a long discussion Henry discloses to Papista his conviction of the wickedness brought upon the world by the Papacy, and his determination that England at least shall be freed from her control. Papista warns him that in that case "Shall Your Majestie loose your title of Defender of the Faythe." Henry: "Nay, we wil be called the destroyers of the false faythe of Antichrist, and maynteners of the trewe faythe of Christe."

The concluding scene represents Edward VI. proclaiming his intention to follow in his footsteps and to put away all such thynges as maye be a hindrance to the goinge forward of the Gospell."

I have sometimes wondered that no publisher has been found enterprising enough to venture upon a reprint of this rare little book. As a terrible indictment against the wickedness of the Papacy in the Sixteenth Century, written by one who was for years in closest communion with her, it is, I think, without

parallel. It consists of little more than two hundred pages, so that the cost of publication would not be great. Moreover, though to the thinker of wider views it opens up suggestions probably not intended by Ochino himself, yet being written, as it is, strictly from the Protestant and orthodox point of view, it might fitly form a companion volume to other books of the same tendency and written about the same period—such, for instance, as Luther's *Table Talk*—and presumably with fair commercial success.

PART II.

STUDIES IN TIMES PRESENT.

*Progress in Japan.**

IT is, I think, a favourable sign of the progress that is taking place—not only throughout Europe, but throughout the whole of the civilized world—that quite lately two pamphlets, written by Japanese gentlemen, have been sent to the editor of this magazine with the evident desire to excite some interest in their country in the minds of the inhabitants both of Great Britain and India. The one is called *A Comparison between Japanese Village Communities and those described by Sir Henry Maine*, by Juichi Soyeda, in which the author endeavours, and I think successfully, to prove the superiority of Japanese village communities over Indian, and enters somewhat fully into a description of the former. I believe that this pamphlet has already received the approval of Sir Henry Maine, and I hope that the author may have sufficient encouragement to induce him to enlarge it into a small volume. It is true that we have some excellent English works written upon Japan—notably the popular work of Miss Bird, and the comprehensive and admirable work of Sir

* This and the following essay were written for an Indian magazine twelve years ago. In light of recent Japanese events they will, I think, be not without interest.

Edward Reed : still, neither individually nor nationally do men ever quite see themselves as others see them ; and in spite of the orthodox moral generally drawn from that undoubted fact, I am inclined to hold that although no doubt it is a difficult matter to "know ourselves," it is a very much more difficult matter for somebody else to know us. Doubtless both kinds of knowledge are desirable, since the one sees what the other seldom, if ever, sees. But still, speaking for myself—given the same amount of conscientiousness and intelligence, I think an autobiography to be of greater worth than a biography ; a political or historical work written by a native as likely to be more accurate and certainly fuller and more comprehensive than one written by an outsider.

The other pamphlet of which I spoke has been written by two members of the Association for Promoting the Adoption of the Roman Alphabet in Japan. To both of these pamphlets I shall have occasion to refer more fully, and if in the course of this paper I should also avail myself somewhat freely of English authorities, I hope that these Japanese gentlemen will believe that I do so only because the information contained within the limits of a pamphlet is necessarily somewhat scanty.

It is a trite remark that where the superficial observer only sees differences the careful student sees resemblances. There is no method in the pursuit of knowledge so efficient as the comparative method, and it is well for this reason—even were there no other—that each nation should endeavour to study the causes

of the gradual growth or the gradual decay in the civilization of other nations. Such knowledge does not stop with itself. By endeavouring to comprehend the political, ceremonial, and ecclesiastical institutions of other nations we almost insensibly gain a better comprehension of our own.

I wish in this paper to draw attention to a country too little known to English-speaking people or to races under the dominion of British rule—Japan; and yet a country that repays studious investigation more than many that are better known. For, in the words of Sir Edward Reed: * “It was not upon a wild, barbarous, and untutored people that the fleets of America and Europe broke with menace and violence a few years ago, but upon an unique nation which had developed within itself arts, letters, and religion, in large part unknown elsewhere, and which now presents to the scholar and philosopher many novel and intensely interesting fields for research. Notwithstanding some adverse events, it is we English who are most earnestly invited to concern ourselves with this wonderful country, and to concern ourselves with it, not merely as traders and seafarers, but as men of intelligence and of progress, able to bear the banners of science and faith into the midst of a people in every way qualified to hail them with welcome, and to bring beneath them forces and ambitions not less worthy than our own.” And a little further on Sir E. Reed bids us remember that the civilization of

* *Japan: Its History, Traditions, and Religions*. Introduction, p. xxiii.

Japan, "though so different from our own, long preceded it, and in some essential particulars still remains superior to it. In courteous demeanour, in cleanliness, in education, the ordinary Japanese peasant far excels the artisan of the Black Country, the tenant of the Irish shanty, or the Russian moujik; while the acquaintance of the native officials with jurisprudence, political economy, the science of government and international law will, on an average, favourably compare with that of the Europeans with whom they are thrown in contact. But," adds Sir E. Reed, "I fear it must be acknowledged that all this is unknown or systematically ignored by us."

It is my intention in this short paper to confine myself to the progress in Japan of the last ten or fifteen years, but before doing this let me endeavour to interpret what seems at first the somewhat curious co-existence of two qualities that are very rarely seen together. On the one hand we must remember that the civilization of Japan, though it is true it had early reached a somewhat high stage of development, was yet for many centuries almost in a stationary condition. On the other hand we have to realize that when progress once set in it made its way with a rapidity almost startling. A condition such as this is so curious as to be approaching the anomalous, for as a rule the nation that has been longest in the stationary condition is the least amenable to progress. The interpretation, it seems to me, is to be traced to those two great factors in the civilization of Japan—the superiority of its early religion and the superiority of its women.

The early religion of Japan, or the Shinto religion as it is called, was, like the early religions of other nations, cruder and less developed than it is at present, but it was less crude and barbarous than the majority of other early religions, either in the East or West. The Japanese believed in gods many and demons many, it is true. But (to quote Sir E. Reed) "they did not so believe in gods and demons as to leave everything to them; they put their own shoulders to the obstructed wheels of their own fortunes, and, as we have just seen, dug canals, raised embankments, bred silkworms, and planted mulberry trees on their own behalf."*

The importance of this cannot be exaggerated. A careful study into the history of various nations proves that those nations that have prospered most are invariably those whose citizens have been least interfered with. It cannot be too strongly insisted that willingness to be helped by others—whether in the shape of priestcraft as in the earlier ages, or in the shape of state interference as with ourselves—generally means unwillingness to help ourselves. But since qualities perish from lack of use, unwillingness to help ourselves in one generation inevitably leads to inability to help ourselves in future generations. And thus a race must deteriorate.

The second great factor is the honourable position that has generally been assigned to Japanese women. The early history of Japan can boast of such a number of distinguished women as would be remarkable even in the early history of Western nations. In the East it

* Vol. i. p. 58.

is without parallel. I need not dwell upon the importance of this factor. All people are, I think, pretty well agreed at the present time that no nation can really progress where one half of its population is in a state of ignorance.

These, then, I take it, are the principal factors in the singular capacity Japan has shown for progress. But why should she have remained so long in a comparatively stationary condition? From her comparative lack of communication with foreign nations. And this is to be traced partly to the absence of foreign trade and residence; partly to the extreme complexity of the Japanese language. Its elements of progress then are intrinsic, while its stationary elements are only extrinsic. Remove these external barriers and progress has to deal—not with a people enervated, retrogressive, uncivilized, but with a people well-disciplined in self-help, self-reliance, perfected by long practice in that most difficult but most necessary of all duties, adaptation to circumstances. The complexity of the language, it is true, still remains. But the reforms that have come about simply from the opening of their ports to foreign trade and residence are almost amazing. I can only briefly allude to a few here.

First, as to the reform in its criminal punishments. A better acquaintance with the more humane punishments of the West made the Japanese in two codes of 1871 and 1873 abolish torture and barbarous modes of execution, which, unfortunately, had been before but too frequent. Punishments now aim, not simply at the prevention of crime, but at the reformation of

the criminals. Convicts are allowed to employ themselves in learning, in the exercise of various trades, even in drawing, painting, and other branches of the fine arts.

The next improvement to which I should like to call attention is the money system. Here, again, the improvement has been owing to the intercourse between Japan and various European nations; though—to the shame of Europeans and Americans be it spoken—they certainly did not gain their knowledge of our monetary system by any information voluntarily bestowed upon them by us, but rather from bitter experience of our dishonesty in taking advantage of their ignorance. When foreigners first penetrated Japan it was found that in the Japanese money system gold and silver were accounted to be of the same value, weight for weight. Considering this too good a chance to be missed, the gold of Japan was rapidly bought up by foreigners—at least Sir E. Reed has been so informed*—for exactly its weight in silver. Further dealings with Europeans soon convinced them of the way in which they had been plundered. Instead of repining, however, at their experience, they profited by it. Investigating the European money system, they became convinced of its superior advantages. They have created a mint and issued a coinage in gold, silver, and bronze, which compares favourably with that of most European countries; and they have also a national paper currency.

One of the chief agents in civilization is, I need

* Vol i. p. 325.

scarcely say, a cheap and efficient system of postage. And here, again, the Japanese have adopted a method that is as good, if not better than any in Europe. The Government postal system was commenced in 1871, and within five years from that time mail routes of more than thirty thousand miles in length were established. The postage for an ordinary letter in large towns is one cent ($\frac{1}{2}$ d.), and two cents for the rest of the empire. Post cards are carried at the rate of exactly half these charges. Money orders are also in use, and post-office savings banks have been established.

There is rather a deficiency in that other great agent in civilization—railways; though, strange to say, great progress has been made in telegraphs.

In the face of all these improvements, it is scarcely surprising that Japan should assert her right to be treated on an equal footing with other nations. The sudden opening up of intercourse with foreign powers has given to international questions a singular interest. The average Japanese public is at present inclined to trace every change, whether for good or bad, to a foreign source; but, on the whole, it is frankly acknowledged that the benefits conferred are far greater and more numerous than the drawbacks, without which it would seem no great change for the better, unfortunately, can be unaccompanied. Mr. Juichi Soyeda mentioned that "anything which is *Western*—a term identical with *civilization*—is preferred to any other."

At no time have the Japanese neglected education;

but quite recently, as with ourselves, there has been a remarkable increase in the belief of the paramount necessity education is to every citizen of whatever rank; and there is now an establishment of an Education Board. Sir E. Reed mentions that in 1868 this Education Board re-opened the Foreign Language School and the old Confucian College, both of which had been closed through the civil wars. The Medical School and Hospital were likewise brought under the new Board. In the following year the Confucian College was converted into a university. In the same year provision was made for translating and compiling text-books for Japanese schools from foreign languages. Provincial governments have been authorized to select promising pupils for education in the Foreign Language School at the Government's expense, and to send students abroad for the study of Western science, literature, and medicine. Nor is female education behindhand. In the year 1872 a female school was opened in Tōkyō for imparting education, both in Japanese and in English, to girls; and many other schools have since been opened. It was under the special patronage of the Empress that the female schools were commenced, and in 1874 her Majesty contributed the sum of five thousand *yens** from her private purse for the education of Japanese girls. This interest she has continued to exhibit ever since.

In Miss Bird's very interesting account of Japanese education,† she draws attention to the fact that the

* A *yen* is a Japanese dollar.

† *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan*, vol. ii. p. 329.

initial difficulty arises from the complexity of the language and of the ideographic symbols, and that the teaching of 3000 of the latter is undertaken in the primary schools. The supply of properly qualified teachers for the lower grades of schools, though increasing, is, for this reason, still somewhat deficient. For a teacher to be efficient it is above all things necessary that he shall himself fully understand what he has to teach; yet many men take their place as teachers after having been only a hundred days in the normal schools. And this allusion of Miss Bird to the complexity of the Japanese ideographic symbols brings me directly to the subject of the second pamphlet, to which I have already alluded—the *Rōmaji Kai*, or the Roman Alphabet Association of Japan.

This pamphlet was written by the two honorary secretaries of the Association, Naibu Kanda and Ryokichi Yatabee, at the instigation of the British Minister, the Honourable F. R. Plunkett. I shall describe the method and aims of this Association as much as possible in the words of the authors of this pamphlet.

The Society originated in this way. The difficulty of mastering the Japanese characters having long made itself felt, a committee of the *Rōmaji Kai* was formed for the purpose of elaborating a consistent system of spelling Japanese words with the Roman alphabet, which, as we all know, consists of twenty-six symbols. But L, Q, V, and X are not used in writing Japanese, and thus the language would be reduced to twenty-two symbols.

"When a language can be adequately represented to the eye by twenty-two signs indicating sounds, why," ask the authors very pertinently, "waste time and effort by continuing to represent it by many thousands of symbols, pictorially indicating objects and ideas? It is a labour of years to learn to write the Japanese language as at present written, namely, with Chinese characters supplemented by the *Kana* syllabary.* To learn to write it with the Roman alphabet requires hardly as many weeks as the present method requires years. "It is certain that the excessive expenditure of mental power in one direction diminishes the stock available for use in other directions. In the effort of learning by heart thousands of intricate symbols of sounds and ideas, the memory is exercised and strengthened at the expense of the other intellectual faculties."

Nor does the pamphlet omit to point to the great advantages which the Japanese people will derive from the employment of an alphabet in which the languages of the leading nations of the world are written.

This new system adopted by the Committee has been based upon the following three principles:—

I.—In using the Roman alphabet the consonants

* According to Captain Brinkley, B.A., of Tokio, the *Kana*, or Japanese syllabary, consists of two sorts: the "*Katakana*," consisting of forty-eight symbols, and used only in conjunction with the square character for explanatory purposes, or to express grammatical terminations; and the "*Hiragana*," also consisting of forty-eight primary characters, but numbering nearly 150, if varieties of form be included. Quoted in Sir E. REED's *Japan*, vol. ii. p. 73.

have been taken at their usual English values, and the vowels at their value in Italian, German, or Latin.

II. The actual pronunciation has been followed, irrespective of their Kana spelling.

III. The standard of pronunciation chosen is that of the educated people in Tōkyō at the present day.

I do not gather that the Japanese Government has as yet done anything to encourage this new system. But if we study the history of any nation carefully we are taught that few great agents in civilization have owed their existence to Government assistance. On the contrary, they have generally had to make their way in the face of Governmental opposition; though it is right for me to admit that the present Government of Japan seems to be singularly enlightened and progressive.

I am informed that strenuous attempts are being made at Lahore for the introduction of Roman type in the various districts of India. But the learned people are somewhat in opposition to the movement, fearing that it may level the languages or possibly destroy the delicate differences that they are anxious to retain.

From the Roman alphabet let us now turn to the consideration of Japanese Village Communities. And in this pamphlet by Juichi Soyeda there is much interesting information on this point, though want of space prevents me discussing it at any great length.

The author mentions in the early part of his work,

that compared with other countries Japanese village populations are more amenable to change and reform; and points with pardonable pride to the fact that Japan in the last twenty years has made as much progress as would take other countries some centuries. I have already pointed out that much of this progress may be traced to the fact that the Japanese have never been fanatics in religion, and I believe also that they have no very rigorous system of caste. Traditions, whether religious or social, always linger longer in rural districts than in cities, because the inhabitants are less frequently brought into intercourse with other minds. But where they have not taken any very strong root the rate of progress possible is always quicker than under the opposite conditions. The process of construction can be commenced without any previous process of destruction, which is oftentimes an injurious process, and always a painful one.

The management and division of land in Japan is so very interesting, that I will give Mr. Soyeda's paragraph dealing with the subject *in extenso* before bringing this paper to a close:—

“Formerly in Japan there was a distinction between the common people and those who were direct vassals of feudal lords; and as it was an agricultural country, the agrarian class was esteemed more than the artisan and the merchant. But there was no legal difference among the common people. With the Restoration came in the principle of liberty and equality; and at present no distinction whatever is made in the eye of the law, down from the nobility to the lowest class. With this

the relations between large and small owners of land, and between landowners and their tenants, were made equal. Among village communities the old and large owners had formerly more privileges than the newly-come and petty ones. But this is not the case now. Large owners of former days kept many farm labourers, to whom they gave lodgings in their own premises, and when the labourers rendered good service the owners induced them to marry and settle down, with the promise of a gift of land. The relation between the owner and his labourers was thus very intimate, and there existed a mutual and lasting interest between the two. The consequent good effects of the settling down of labourers were many; foremost among them was that every deserving labourer became an owner of some portion of land. The result of this is that there is hardly a villager to be found nowadays who has not interest in some landed property. These small holders having usually a larger family than can be provided for, become tenants of larger owners. Most of them having risen from mere labourers, are hard workers, and being themselves petty owners, none of them are ever placed at the mercy of large landowners. Hence the comparative weakness of landlordism in Japan. Yet with the progress of time such an arrangement with labourers is becoming very rare, and labourers for life are now replaced by those who are paid yearly or monthly, or even daily—the last increasing very fast. As was not the case in former times, competition acts freely; and the owner changes tenants and labourers according as his will or profit directs him. Things are going too

far, and the evil of competition * has recently given rise to the refusal to pay rent by a body of tenants, and to the rapid exhaustion of the fertility of the soil by the excessive lime which induces an abundant crop one year, but lessens the produce in the future, for which, however, cunning and temporary tenants by no means care. Thus the interests of owner and tenants are becoming antagonistic."

That "the beginning is half of the whole" has passed into a proverb; and so we cannot doubt that now that progress has once commenced in Japan, it will certainly continue. But rapid as is its rate even now, it yet may be greatly accelerated—first, by the establishment of a greater number of railways; secondly and chiefly, by the introduction of the Roman alphabet into the Japanese language. English writers have long complained of the difficulty, I might almost say the impossibility, of mastering a language, in which at the lowest estimate a schoolboy was required to learn one thousand different characters; in which a man laying any claim to scholarship must know eight or ten thousand characters; while those who would pass for men of great learning are expected to be acquainted with many tens of thousands. But now that the Japanese are themselves beginning to recognize this difficulty, there is every reason to hope that the desired simplification will take place. Europeans

* I would, however, point out to Mr. Soyeda that though competition is not without dangers of its own, the dangers of protection are greater. As has been well said: To prevent competition is to protect incompetence:

should be almost as much interested in this movement as the Japanese, for it is easier for the Japanese to master the various languages of Europe than it is for us fully to understand the language of Japan in its present complex condition. And although no doubt Japan has much to learn from Europe, everyone possessing even a slight familiarity with the history and civilization of the Japanese will admit that Europe also has somewhat to learn from Japan.

Education in Japan.

IN the preceding paper I devoted a few pages to the consideration of Japanese progress in the broad and general sense. I now wish to enlarge a little more fully upon that special factor in progress that goes by the name of Education, and I do this, partly, because since my last paper I have received a very interesting and instructive report, called *Education in Japan*, from the United States Bureau of Education.*

Before proceeding to discuss the details and complex machinery of Japanese education, I wish to point out that the interest Japan is beginning to excite in America, and, indeed, in most civilized nations, is for her and for all an education in itself, in a far fuller and more comprehensive sense of the word than mere scholastic routine. Especially interesting is the intercourse between Japan and America, between one of the oldest civilizations in the world and quite the newest.

In a letter forming a sort of preface to *Education in Japan*, General Eaton, the Commissioner of the

* Being No. IV. of the "Circulars of Information of the Bureau of Education," Washington, Government Printing Office, 1885.

Department of the Interior Bureau of Education, mentions that "Japan is recognized as one of the countries making most rapid progress in improvements in education. The relations between Americans and Japanese since the opening of Japan to foreign intercourse have been most cordial, and the interchange of educational information between the two countries has been constant. Americans are watchful of all the indications of Japanese progress in educational improvements."

This mutual good feeling and interest is, I think, a singularly hopeful sign of the feeling that may perhaps, in some distant future, come about between all nations. For like begets like, and qualities increase by practice. It is almost impossible for two nations always warring with each other not to dislike each other. It is equally impossible for two nations mutually benefiting one another not to rejoice in each other's good. In the barbaric, uncivilized ages, war, always an evil, might yet have been a necessary evil. Only through its means, perhaps, could civilization have spread and the inferior races disappear before or amalgamate with the superior. But when the present partial establishment of those mighty agents in international amity shall have become universal—the invention of railways, by which men can be brought into personal communication with the habits and customs of other nations; the invention of the printing-press, by which the thoughtful of one nation can have their theories checked or confirmed by the writings of the great thinkers of other nations; and

the establishment of Free Trade, by which the workers of all nations may distribute the products of their labour as they may think fit, regulating their work according to the natural and universal laws of supply and demand—it seems to me that these great factors will make all aggressive war, if once a necessary evil, then an evil wholly without justification. I think it possible that the time may come when all the countries of the civilized world may consider themselves as one vast workshop, each labouring for the good of itself as part of one great whole, where the only rivalry shall be the healthy one of competition, each striving which among all shall show the greater excellence. A rivalry, too, without even the slight drawbacks between fellow-citizens of the same profession or age; where, if one has the delight of winning, the other, though he may be stung into increased future effort, has the present mortification of losing. But nations differ for the most part in kind where individuals of the same profession differ in degree. Germany, for instance, may rightfully consider herself pre-eminent in music; Italy is, or perhaps was, the greatest in painting; England the foremost in literature. In like manner no European nation can compare in carving and kindred arts with India, China, and Japan.* With

* It is strange how seldom even great drawbacks are without some compensating advantages. In my former paper upon Japan I had occasion to draw attention to the peculiar disadvantages under which Japan suffered through the complexity of her alphabet. It had not occurred to me then,—what I have only learnt through Sir Rutherford Alcock's admirable article in the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*,—that a good deal of the peculiar perfection

the more mundane wants of human nature the same division holds good. From one country we get our coffee, from another our spices. We are provided with furs from this country, and from that with cotton. In like manner I am not among those who deprecate the growing custom of citizens of one country investing in the stocks and railways of other countries. Fraudulent foreign investments are foolish, it is true, but because they are fraudulent, not because they are foreign; and the evil of fraud can scarcely impress us more strongly than when the dishonesty of one nation sows misery and anxiety in many nations. All habits and practices that tend to make each nation consider itself only a part of one vast body, in which if one member suffer all members suffer with it, are to be encouraged. Nor among influences tending towards this end must be forgotten that gentle and benign one of social intercourse. A better acquaintance with, and a healthy interest in, the habits and customs of other nations, is a very real factor in the welfare and happiness of each nation.

To return, however, to the subject before us—that of education in Japan—in the more limited and usually received sense of the word. I should first of Japanese carving may be traced to this same complexity of syllabary. “During the long apprenticeship,” says Sir R. Alcock, “that the Japanese serve to acquire the power of writing with the brush the thousand complicated characters borrowed from the Chinese, they unconsciously cultivate the habit of minute observation and the power of accurate imitation, and with these a delicacy of touch and freedom of hand which only long practice could give. A hair-breadth’s deviation of a line, or the slight inclination of a dot or an angle, is fatal to good caligraphy.”

explain that this American Report has been prepared and translated by the Japanese Department of Education. And though, of course, lack of space will compel me to abbreviate, I shall, subject to this limitation, give the details of Japanese education in the words of the Report itself.

The territorial organization of Japan is divided into nine circuits, and these are subdivided into eighty-four provinces, for the purpose of administering which are established the three *fu*, or imperial cities of Tokio, Kioto, and Osaka, and forty-four *ken*, or prefectorial divisions of the empire. Under *fu* and *ken* there are *ku* and *gun*, which are subdivided into wards and villages for the purpose of local administration. Tokio is the seat of government, the imperial palace being also seated there. According to the census of 1882 the population of the country is 37,041,368, of which 5,750,946 are school population. All the administrative affairs of the country are under the control of the Emperor. There is a governor in each *fu* and *ken*, who exercises jurisdiction in accordance with the laws and regulations passed by the Government. In every *gun* and *ku* there is a *gunchō* and *kuchō*, who controls the *gun* or *ku* under the superintendence of the governor; and in every village there is a *kochō* under the supervision of a *gunchō* or *kuchō*.

In regard to education, there are school committees especially organized in the villages to conduct the various matters concerning the school attendance of children, the establishment and maintenance of schools, &c., under the supervision of the governors. They are

nominated in each school district by the people of that district, and then the governor selects a certain number of those thus nominated. The tenure of office of the school committees is not less than four years, and their number, salaries, &c., are determined by the village assembly, with the approval of the governor. Persons qualified to serve as members of the school committees, or take part in the nomination of the same, must be males upwards of twenty years of age, possessing either lands or buildings, and having both legal and actual residence within their respective school districts. The Department of Education is one of ten departments under Privy Council, and the Minister of Education has control over all affairs connected with the education of the country, assisted of course by senior and junior vice-ministers. He prepares drafts in regard to the establishment and abolition of such laws and regulations as are connected with education, and submits them to the Emperor for approval; he also signs such laws and regulations, and is responsible for them; and when any proceeding of a governor in relation to education is deemed improper, he has the right of nullifying it. The ministers and vice-ministers visit from time to time the schools of every *fu* or *ken*, or send officers under them in their place. The governors are bound to present every year a detailed report of education within their jurisdiction, and to give also a report on the result of instruction. The minister then arranges all these reports in proper order, and after making his own remarks and adding statistics, he presents them

to the Emperor as the Annual Report of the Department of Education. This report is afterwards made public to show the condition of local education. The Minister of Education has organized an academy which is to inquire into matters concerning education. The members of the academy are at present twenty-one in all, and are all good scholars of high reputation. The seven original members were chosen by the minister himself, and the rest have from time to time been elected by the vote of the members. The president and vice-president are chosen by the members, their tenure of office being one year.

The following are the schools and institutions for advanced or special instruction:—

Kindergarten.—These are designed to train children of either sex under school age, and with a view to assisting home education. According to investigations made in 1882 there are seven kindergartens. The regulations and general management are determined according to local conditions, and are consequently not uniform.

Elementary Schools.—These comprise those schools in which compulsory general education is given, and the total number of these elementary schools is 29,081. The length of the course of study is three years in the lower grades, comprising the elements of morals, reading, writing, arithmetic, singing, and gymnastics; three years in the intermediate grade, comprising the elements of geography, drawing, history, physics, natural history, and (for girls) sewing; and two years in the higher grade, which, in addition to

the previous named studies, comprises the elements of chemistry, geometry, and political economy for boys and domestic economy for girls. Teachers of elementary schools must be upwards of eighteen years of age, and must duly possess certificates or teachers' licences.

Middle Schools.—These are organized according to the local conditions of each *fu* and *ken*. Their object is to give higher instruction in the common branches of study so as to prepare students for liberal pursuits, or for the more advanced schools. The number of middle schools, including both private and public institutions, is 172. The course of study is divided into two grades. The lower grade comprises morals, Japanese and Chinese literature, English language, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, geography, history, physiology, zoology, botany, physics, chemistry, political economy, book-keeping, writing, drawing, singing, and gymnastics. The higher grade consists of a combination of Japanese and Chinese literature, English language, book-keeping, and in addition trigonometry, mineralogy, Japanese law, physics, and chemistry. The English language may sometimes be omitted, and German or French substituted for it. The length of the course of study is four years in the lower grade and two years in the higher.

University.—There is only one university, called *Tōkiō Daigaku*, which is under the control of the Department of Education. Its object is to give instruction in the special branches of study; it consists of the four departments of law, science, medicine, and literature.

In the Department of Law a course of study is provided to teach students principally Japanese law, English and French law being added.

In the Department of Science a course of instruction is provided in mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, astronomy, engineering, geology, mining, and metallurgy.

In the Department of Medicine a course of instruction is provided in medicine and pharmacy, and a special course is also provided. The object of the ordinary course in medicine is to train students for the degree of *Igakushi*, and the length of the course of study is five years; but the object of the special course is to train students as practical physicians, and the length of this course is four years. The length of the course of study in pharmacy is three years.

In the Department of Literature a course of instruction is provided in philosophy, political economy, political science, and Japanese and Chinese literature.

In the Department of Science there are astronomical and meteorological observations. There are also botanical gardens and museums. In the Department of Medicine there are two hospitals, to which sick people are admitted, and in certain cases they are taken care of gratuitously. These are provided to enable students to gain practical knowledge of their subject. Besides these there are the Military Academy, under the control of the War Department, and the Engineering College, under the control of the Department of Public Works.

Normal Schools.—These are for the purpose of

training students as teachers of elementary schools. It is intended that they shall be established in every *fu* and *ken*. In 1882, when the last computation was made, the number of public normal schools was seventy-six, with some branch schools annexed to them. A certificate is given by the school to every student who completes the course of study in the normal schools. Then the students who complete the higher grade course are qualified as teachers of any elementary school course; those who complete the lower grade course as teachers of that course, and those who complete the intermediate grade as teachers of the same in like manner. The certificate is valid for seven years. When there is manifest evidence as to deep knowledge, thorough experience in the ways of teaching, and good conduct, a new certificate, available for seven years, or for life, may be given without examination, even after the expiration of seven years.

In addition to the schools already enumerated there are professional schools, agricultural schools, commercial schools, higher female schools, and a variety of miscellaneous schools. Industrial schools have yet to be established, and they are already in preparation. Until they are completed, students have to learn practical business at the industrial factories. There is, however, one industrial school already established by the Department of Education called the Tōkiō Industrial School, where students are trained as teachers of industrial schools, or foremen of labourers, or directors of factories.

Text-Books.—In all cases text-books are chosen with great care; but with respect to these books, especially concerning general education, the Department of Education takes the responsibility of examining them and ascertaining whether they are fit for text-books or not, and from time to time informs the governors of the result of the examination which will assist them in choosing text-books. Also with respect to those books concerning morals, the Department of Education indicates the general principles of compiling them, and requires special attention in publishing them. The Department also compiles and publishes text-books to serve as models for authors.

Libraries and Educational Museums.—These are organized in different localities. There are nineteen libraries, which are said to be in good organization. There are also several reading-rooms, which are provided within the schools, &c., for the use of teachers and students; they are also open to the public. The object of educational museums is to arrange in order objects concerning education, and to provide them for the benefit of educators. There are four principal museums. There are two establishments organized by the Department of Education: they are the Tōkiō Library and the Tōkiō Educational Museum. In the first, all books useful for study, without distinction as to whether they are Japanese, Chinese, European, or American, are collected and shown to the public. Those who write, translate, or compile books necessary to education, are allowed to take any book out of the library by special permission granted by the Minister

of Education. In the Tōkiō Educational Museum objects necessary to general education are collected for the benefit of persons engaged in education, but they are also shown to the public. The objects comprise all instruments and apparatus used in schools—text-books, specimens of animals, plants, minerals, &c.—which are supplied at trifling cost to schools in different localities.

Students sent abroad.—Many hundreds of students have at different times been sent abroad. The number of students abroad at the time of the issue of the Report (viz., 1885) was twenty-two; of whom seventeen were in Germany, one in Austria, two in England, one in France, and one in America. All of them are graduates of Tōkiō Daikagu, who were specially selected by the Minister of Education to pursue their studies more thoroughly.

For the encouragement of local education, prizes and rewards are given to teachers, as well as to students, of public and private schools, libraries, and museums. The funds are provided from the national exchequer. Private schools are maintained by the fees for instruction, or by private money.

Such is a brief summary of educational organization in Japan; and I think that most impartial readers will concede that it is excelled by few, if any, countries in Europe.

But, since it is seldom that there can be any great advantage bestowed without some corresponding disadvantage, let me point out what seems to be the "rocks ahead" in this great perfection to which education is now being carried. And these remarks

apply almost as gravely to European education as to Japanese.

The great danger to be guarded against in the present day is the tendency to regard education as an end in itself, instead of only a valuable means to that end. Not a certain amount of book learning, but improvement of character, development of self-reliance, self-discipline, a capacity for weighing evidence, of tracing effect from cause, &c.—these are the desiderata; and though book-learning may be, and often is, of great assistance, it may sometimes become an actual hindrance. The receptive faculty and the originating faculty may often proceed in inverse ratio. The great danger of compulsory state interference of all kinds is that it can only deal with masses and not with individuals. The wisest state is that which interferes as little as possible with parental responsibilities, or with the liberty of the individual, so long as parents or individuals have done nothing to show themselves unfit for responsibility. Not only does the originating faculty die out if never exercised, but the capacity for self-government also decreases by lack of practice. This danger, sufficiently grave in all countries where there is an undue amount of state interference, was until lately intensified in Japan by reason of the fact that there was no freedom of the press. There was consequently no criticism in the real sense of the word. The nearest approach to anything of the sort could only be effected by ingenuity or chicane. The favourite method was to draw a satirical picture of Japan under the guise of some other name. But even this involved a certain amount of risk.

This danger, however, now is largely a thing of the past. The Japanese have been too wise not to see that a government, however enlightened, is always subject to that great temptation of governments—undue love of power; and that freedom of the press is almost the only means by which this love of power, or (to speak more accurately), this abuse of power can be kept in check. The *Japan Mail* and other papers now discuss national affairs with a considerable amount of freedom; while in special subjects, such as science, there is a still wider latitude given; there being as much outspokenness in matters of hygiene and other matters pertaining to state medicine as among ourselves.

One more rock ahead Japan has to guard against—loss of her pristine originality. In my former paper I drew attention to the advantage comparative freedom from fanaticism had been to her. Her insular position too has had the benefits as well as the drawbacks of all insularity. But now that foreign intercourse has been opened to her, she has availed herself of it with a freedom from prejudice and vanity as commendable as it is unusual. Her danger here is that this laudable admiration of Western habits and customs shall be reasonable and restrained, shall never degenerate into unreasonable or superstitious idolatry. Let her recognize also that the only lasting progress is that which is developed from within, not that which is artificially enforced from without.

Guarding against these few rocks ahead, it is difficult not to believe that a great future will be assured to Japan.

Thackeray's Letters.

THERE are so many of us familiar with Thackeray's novels, and so few of us who know anything of the character and inner life of their writer, that the publication of this volume of letters may be regarded as a genuine contribution to literature. Unfortunately, the earliest of them dates no further back than the year 1847, and the majority were written a good deal later than this. *Vanity Fair* was commenced in serial numbers in 1846; and with the publication of *Vanity Fair* Thackeray's failures and struggles and difficulties may be said almost to have ceased. But the struggling portion of a man's life is always the more interesting, and very often, I think, the more instructive to the majority of his admirers. We are incited to bear bravely our own troubles when we find that others have been tried with like troubles. We are more likely to rouse ourselves to conquer all obstacles when we find that similar obstacles have not been found insuperable by one who at last fought his way to world-wide reputation.

But still let us be grateful for what we have. Though we should have preferred the publication of letters written in that dreary period of an author's life—a period unusually prolonged in Thackeray's

case—when publishers reject his works and editors decline his papers, or accept them more or less under protest, the period next in importance and interest is that immediately following his first real success. And this collection of letters, beginning in 1847 and ending in 1855, may be said all to have been written during this period. It is perhaps a little strange that Thackeray, who could portray the character of his own sex so admirably, but so far failed in delineating the opposite that he seldom drew a woman who was not either silly and good, or wicked and clever, should have invariably preferred women as the confidantes of his hopes and fears, his troubles and successes. Yet why should it be strange? Under all Thackeray's cynicism and sarcasm lay a shy, acutely sensitive nature; and though frivolous women of fashion are, Heaven knows, shallow and unfeeling enough, the tender-hearted, intelligent woman has, I think, a finer tact and power of sympathy than the tender-hearted, intelligent man. There are about a hundred letters contained in this volume, and over thirty illustrations, more or less humorous, all from the pen of Thackeray. More than two-thirds of these letters are written to Mrs. Brookfield; the rest being divided between the Rev. W. H. Brookfield, her husband, and a Mrs. Elliott and her sister, Miss Perry. They are all written with a charming spontaneity and affectionateness, and many of the later ones with such a playfulness and buoyancy of spirits, that makes one regret that his success came so tardily, and that his married happiness was so grievously marred by the

terrible affliction of his wife's madness. We cannot but feel that brilliant as are his works, had his domestic surroundings only been happier, his commercial difficulties less pressing, those writings might have been equally brilliant, yet free from that tinge of cynicism which, as has been well expressed, leaves behind a "bitter taste in the mouth."

Two or three of the earlier letters are of especial autobiographical interest, in so far as they contain passages evidently relating to the progress and reception of *Vanity Fair*. For instance, in the first letter to Mr. Brookfield, dated January, 1847, he says, "I am being brought to bed of my seventh darling with inexpressible throes, and dine out every day until *Juice* knows when." Strange to say, *Vanity Fair* had found little favour with publishers, and none at all with editors of magazines. At last it was brought out in numbers—twenty-four in all—under the auspices of Messrs. Bradbury and Evans. Later on, in 1847, someone wrote to congratulate Thackeray on the success of his novel, assuring him that he had "completely beaten Dickens out of the inner circle."

One of the most refreshing traits in Thackeray's character is his absolute freedom from jealousy, and his hearty undisguised admiration of his more successful rival. Still, on reception of this letter, he is too naïvely pleased to be able to refrain from sending it to his kind sympathiser, Mrs. Brookfield. As the months slip on, and the tale progresses, unfavourable as well as favourable reviews naturally

have to be borne. "Did you read the *Spectator's* sarcastic notice of V. F.?" he writes. "I don't think it is just, but think *Rintoul* is a very honest man, and rather inclined to deal severely with his private friends, lest he should fall into the other extreme; to be sure he keeps out of it, I mean the other extreme, very well."

The next letter to which I wish to draw attention (for limited space necessarily makes me pass over many that deserve to be carefully read) is one upon the death of the lamented Charles Buller, and with which all sons and daughters who have elderly parents will be able to sympathize. "I am very much pained and shocked at the news brought at dinner to-day that poor dear Charles Buller is gone. Good God! think about the poor mother surviving, and what an anguish that must be! If I were to die, I cannot bear to think of my mother living beyond me, as I dare say she will. But isn't it an awful, awful sudden summons? There go wit, fame, friendship, ambition, high repute! Ah! *aimons nous bien*. It seems to me that is the only thing we can carry away. When we go, let us have some to love us, wherever we are."

The next letter deals with a subject more necessary to be exposed and fought against in his generation perhaps than in our own; I mean asceticism, or the doctrine that all amusement and enjoyment, however innocent, is sinful in the eyes of the Almighty: "I was thinking about Joseph Bullar's doctrine after I went to bed, founded on what I cannot but think a blasphemous asceticism, which has obtained in the

world ever so long, and which is disposed to curse, hate, and undervalue the world altogether. Why should we? What we see here of this world is but an expression of God's will, so to speak—a beautiful earth and sky and sea—beautiful affections and sorrows, wonderful changes and developments of creation, suns rising, stars shining, birds singing, clouds and shadows changing and fading, people loving each other, smiling and crying, the multiplied phenomena of Nature, multiplied in fact and fancy, in Art and Science, in every way that a man's intellect or education or imagination can be brought to bear. And who is to say that we are to ignore all this, or not value them and love them, because there is another unknown world yet to come? Why, that unknown future world is but a manifestation of God's almighty will and a development of Nature, neither more nor less than this in which we are, and an angel glorified or a sparrow on a gutter are equally parts of His creation. The light upon all the saints in heaven is just as much and no more God's work as the sun which shall shine to-morrow upon this infinitesimal speck of creation, and under which I shall read, please God, a letter from my kindest Lady and friend. About my future state I don't know; I leave it in the disposal of the awful Father, but for to-day I thank God that I can love you, and that you yonder, and others besides, are thinking of me with a tender regard. Hallelujah may be greater in degree than this, but not in kind, and countless ages of stars may be blazing infinitely, but you and I have a right to rejoice and believe in

our little part and to trust in to-day as in to-morrow. God bless my dear lady and her husband."

Even after the success of *Vanity Fair*, Thackeray had a good many commercial difficulties to contend against.

The following letter, -dated April 10th, 1849, is interesting, as showing how bravely he resolved to struggle through with them, as if determined to make good come out of misery :—

"After lying in bed. . . exceeding melancholy from want of sleep. . . shall I tell you what it was dissipated my blue devils? As I was going towards London the postman stopped me in the street and asked me if I would take my letters, which he handed to me—one was an opera-box, which I sent off to Mrs. M. for to-morrow; and one was a letter from an attorney, demanding instantly £112 for that abominable Irish Railway; and in presence of this real calamity all the sentimental ones vanished straight. I began to think how I must raise the money—how I must go to work, nor be shilly-shallying any longer; and with this real care staring me in the face I began to forget imaginary grievances, and to think about going to work immediately; and how for the next three months I must screw and save in order to pay off the money. And this is the way, ma'am, that the grim duties of the world push the soft feelings aside; we've no time to be listening to *their* little meek petitions and tender home-prattle in presence of the imperative Duty, who says, 'Come, come, no more of this here—get to work, mister,'—

and so we go on and join the working gang, behind which necessity marches cracking his whip. This metaphor has not been worked so completely as it might be, but it means that I am resolved to go to work directly. . . I have been to the banker's to see how much money I have got. I have got £120; I owe £112; from £120 take £112, leaves £8 for the rest of the month. Isn't that pleasant?"

A letter written from Brighton, in 1849, gives us a glimpse into the progress of *Pendennis*. "Being entirely occupied with my two new friends, Mrs. Pendennis and her son, Mr. Arthur Pendennis, I got up very early again this morning, and was with them for more than two hours before breakfast. He is a very good-natured, generous young fellow, and I begin to like him considerably. I wonder whether he is interesting to me from selfish reasons, and because I fancy we resemble each other in many points, and whether I can get the public to like him too. . . I had a mind to send you a weekly paper containing contemptuous remarks regarding an author of your acquaintance. I don't know who this critic is, but he always has a shot at me once a month, and I bet a guinea he is an Irishman."

In the succeeding letter he tells his friend: "I have written a wicked number of *Pendennis*, but like it rather; it has a good moral, I believe, although to some it may appear naughty. Big Higgins [Jacob Omnium], who dined with me yesterday, offered me, what do you think? 'If,' says he, 'you are tired and want to lie fallow for a year, come to me for the

money. I have much more than I want.' Wasn't it kind? I like to hear and to tell of kind things."

Another letter in this same year is written in a sadder strain: "What you say about Mrs. — being doomed does not affect me very much, I am afraid. I don't see that living is such a benefit, and could find it in my heart pretty readily to have an end of it—after wasting a deal of opportunities and time and desires in vanitarianism. What is it makes one so *blasé* and tired, I wonder, at thirty-eight? Is it pain, or pleasure? Present solitude, or too much company before? Both very likely. You see I am here as yesterday, gloomy again, and thrumming on the old egotistical string. But that I think you would be pleased to have a letter from me, dear lady, I'd burn these two sheets or give my blue devils some other outlet than into your kind heart."

Probably the real cause of his occasional fits of despondency was the consciousness of what he and his little ones had lost through their mother's affliction. In another letter, written in this same year, he tells his friend: "Yesterday I went into the country to see Miss R.'s husband, my old friend S. They have just got a little son, a beautiful child, and the happiness of this couple was pleasant, albeit somehow painful to witness. She is a very nice, elegant, accomplished young lady. . . . She is a little thing, and put me in mind of my wife somehow. . . . When I saw that nice little Mrs. S. with her child yesterday, of course I thought about somebody else. The tones of a mother's voice speaking to an infant, play the deuce somehow; that

charming nonsense and tenderness work upon me until I feel like a woman or a great big baby myself—fiddlededee.”

As his successes increase upon him, so, naturally, do invitations crowd in upon him. In a letter, dated 23rd April, 1850, he mentions: “I have an awful week of festivities before me; to-day, Shakespeare’s birthday at the Garrick Club, dinner and speech. Lunch, Madame Lionel Rothschild’s; ball, Lady Waldegrave’s—she gives the finest balls in London, and I have never seen one yet. To-morrow, of five invitations to dinner, the first is Mr. Marshall, the Duke of Devonshire’s evening party, Lady Emily Dundas’ ditto. Thursday, Sir Anthony Rothschild. Friday, the domestic affections. Saturday, Sir Robert Peel. Sunday, Lord Lansdowne’s. Isn’t it curious to think—it was striking my great mind yesterday, as Annie was sorting the cards in the chimney-glass—that there are people who would give their ears or half their income to go to these fine places?”

In another letter, written some time in 1850, again occurs a painful allusion to his great sorrow. “As I am waiting to see Mrs. Buller I find an old review with an advertisement in it, containing a great part of an article I wrote about Fielding in 1840, in the *Times*. . . . My wife was just sickening at that moment; I wrote it at Margate, where I had taken her, and used to walk out three miles to a little bowling-green and write there in an arbour, coming home and wondering what was the melancholy oppressing the poor little woman. The *Times* gave me five guineas for the

article. I recollect I thought it rather shabby pay, and twelve days after it appeared in the paper my poor little wife's malady showed itself. How queer it is to be carried back all of a sudden to that time and all that belonged to it and read this article over; doesn't the apology for Fielding read like an apology for somebody else too? God help us, what a deal of cares and pleasures and struggles and happiness I have had since that day in the little sunshiny harbour, where, with scarcely any money in my pocket, and two little children (Minnie was a baby two months old), I was writing this notice about Fielding. Grief, Love, Fame, if you like—I have had no little of all since then (I don't mean to take the fame for more than it's worth, or brag about it with any peculiar elation)."

In this same year is written a touching letter upon the death of H. F. Hallam, brother of Arthur Hallam, well known as the inspirer of Tennyson's *In Memoriam*:

"I went to Clevedon and saw the last rites performed for poor dear Harry. I went from here and waited at Candy's till the time of the funeral, in such cold weather! Candy's shop was full of ceaseless customers all the time—there was a little boy buying candles, and an old woman with the toothache; and at last the moment drew nigh, and Tinling, in a scarf and hat-band driving himself down from the court, passed the shop, and I went down to the church. It looked very tranquil and well-ordained, and I had half an hour there before the procession came in view. Those ceremonies over a corpse—the immortal soul of a man being in the keeping of God, and beyond the

reach of all undertakers—always appear to me shocking rather than solemn; and the horses and plumes give me pain. The awful moment was when the dear old father—the coffin being lowered into the vault where so much of his affection and tenderest love lies buried—went down into the cave and gave the coffin a last kiss; there was no standing that last most affecting touch of nature.”

Still, Thackeray's letters are not all written in this strain. His brilliant success, at all events during the first flush of it, gave him undoubted gratification; and he had, moreover, within him a boyish love of practical jokes, a keen perception of the humorous side of human life, that is in itself a source of pleasure to the possessor. One of his whimsical oddities was to have himself announced by some name other than his own; more often than not the name he would select would be that of some notorious murderer or forger, whose trial might at the time be going on. In one of his letters, dated September 14th, 1849, he mentions: ‘I am afraid I disgusted Macaulay yesterday at dinner at Sir George Napier's. We were told that an American lady was coming in the evening, whose great desire in life was to meet the author of *Vanity Fair* and the author of the *Lays of A. Rome*, so I proposed to Macaulay to enact me, and let me take his character; but he said solemnly that he did not approve of practical jokes, and so this sport did not come to pass.”

Apropos of this love of Thackeray for passing himself off under some other name than his own, an amusing anecdote is contributed by his friend, Miss

Perry, which is printed, among other anecdotes, as a sort of appendix to the *Letters*: "Thackeray had been asked to join some friends at dinner, but not arriving at the prescribed hour, the guests sat down without him. Among them was Mr. H——, the author of some of the most charming books of the day. The conversation being more literary than otherwise, Thackeray (then at the very height of his fame) came under discussion, and some of his greatest friends and admirers being present, he was spoken of with unqualified admiration. Mr. H—— was the exception, and dissented from us, in very unmeasured terms, in our estimate of Thackeray's character. 'Judging,' he said, 'from the tenor of his books, he could not believe how one who could dwell as he did on the weaknesses and absurdities and shortcomings of his fellow-creatures, could possess any kind or generous sympathies towards the human race.' He concluded his severe judgment by saying that 'He had never met him, and hoped he never should do so.' We were all so occupied by this fiery debate, that we did not observe that, under the sobriquet of some jail-bird of the day, Thackeray had slipped into his chair and had heard much that was said, including the severe peroration. A gentle tap on Mr. H——'s shoulder, and, in his pleasant low voice, Thackeray said, 'I, on the contrary, have always longed for the occasion when I could express personally to Mr. H—— the great admiration I have always felt for him as an author and a man.' It is pleasant to think they became fast friends thereafter."

As the years pass, notwithstanding the vein of humour that never entirely leaves him, it is impossible not to see that worldly success and mere applause gradually begin to weary him, while the consciousness of his domestic desolation increases upon him. The following deeply touching letter was written from New York in January, 1853 :—

“At present I incline to come to England in June or July, and get ready a new set of lectures, and bring them back with me. That second course will enable me to provide for the children and their mother finally and satisfactorily, and my mind will be easier after that, and I can sing *Nunc Dimittis* without faltering. There is money-making to try at, to be sure, and ambition—I mean in public life ; perhaps that might interest a man, but not novels, nor lectures, nor fun, any more. I don't seem to care about these any more, or for praise or for abuse, or for reputation of that kind. That literary play is played out, and the puppets going to be locked up for good and all. . . . Oh ! I am tired of shaking hands with people, and acting the lion business night after night. . . . What a weary, weary letter I am writing to you. Have you heard that I have found Beatrix at New York ? I have basked in her bright eyes, but—ah, me ! I don't care for her, and shall hear of her marrying a New York buck with a feeling of perfect pleasure. . . . She has a dear woman of a mother, upwards of fifty-five, whom I like the best, I think, and think the handsomest—a sweet lady. . . . I can't live without the tenderness of some woman, and expect when I am sixty I shall

be marrying a girl of eleven or twelve, innocent, barley-sugar loving, in a pinafore. . . . Crowe is my immenseness of comfort; I could not live without someone to take care of me, and he is the kindest and most affectionate henchman ever man had."

Thackeray's gratitude to the friend he thus mentions is best shown by the fact that he adopted Amy Crowe, making her in all respects one of the family; and she afterwards married Edward Thackeray, one of her benefactor's cousins.

On Christmas Day, 1863, William Makepeace Thackeray died very suddenly in his bed, early in the morning. His labours had ceased; his troubles over at the comparatively early age of fifty-two. He was of an essentially shy, retiring nature, and more than once desired his daughter to publish no memoir of him. That daughter has (rightly, I think) thought it her duty to obey this injunction literally, and has even withheld from publication all his letters to his family. But however we may approve of the daughter's adherence to her father's wishes, it is impossible not to regret the father's injunction, since his private reputation has, I think, thereby suffered. If all Thackeray's private letters resemble in any way those he wrote to Mrs. Brookfield, it is certain that his inner nature was no less lovable than his genius was admirable.

John Francis and the "Athenæum."

WE have seldom come across Memoirs more interesting and instructive than this *Literary Chronicle of Half a Century*.* They are not confined to a mere sketch of the *Athenæum* journal. As Mr. Fox Bourne has well remarked in his Introductory Note, "Its reviews of books, its obituary notices, and its original articles on matters of interest in literature, science, and art, with occasional and cautious diversion into the fields of politics and social turmoil, have enabled the compiler to furnish a most instructive and a really comprehensive view of the general progress of intellectual life throughout nearly threescore years." To the present writer the first volume seems of greater interest and importance than the second; partly because in literary as in political history the period we know least about is that immediately preceding our own generation; partly, also, because the journal itself hardly occupies the unique position of its earlier days. It is no disparagement to its present good management to point to this fact. To a certain extent its cause is to be

* JOHN FRANCIS, publisher of the *Athenæum: A Literary Chronicle of Half a Century*. Compiled by JOHN C. FRANCIS; with an Introductory Note by H. B. FOX BOURNE. In two volumes. Bentley and Son.

traced to the excellence of its own early management. Success invariably provokes competition, and the growth of the periodical press since the foundation of the *Athenæum* has been simply enormous. Not only have we other papers almost as entirely devoted to literary matters as the *Athenæum* itself. We have scientific newspapers which review admirably books on science; we have fashionable newspapers to review light literature; and upon the staff of almost all our daily papers are able writers, competent to review works of general interest. Thus the first volume of this work contains information we should have difficulty in finding elsewhere; the second, especially in its later pages, gives little that might not easily be discovered in other publications of the same date.

The book opens with a short Preface by the compiler; an Introductory Note by Mr. Fox Bourne, to which I have already alluded; followed by a copy of the "*Original Prospectus. The 'Athenæum,' a new Literary Gazette and Weekly Critical Review. To be published on Wednesday mornings, Price Eightpence, and to commence on the 2nd of January, 1828.*" The first chapter is entirely occupied with the uncompleted autobiography of John Francis; so that it is not until we come to the second chapter that the subject of the *Athenæum* properly commences.

The original founder of the *Athenæum* was James Silk Buckingham; the first number of the newspaper being published on January 2nd, 1828; and on the 16th of the same month the Rev. F. D. Maurice commenced an interesting series of "Sketches of Con-

temporary Authors." The eighth number of the journal announces that in future it will be published twice a week—Tuesday and Friday; but after five issues this had to be abandoned, and its former method of publication resumed. On July 30th the *London Literary Chronicle* was united to the *Athenæum*, and Maurice, who had been part proprietor and editor of the *Chronicle*, became editor of the united papers, a few friends having purchased the property from Mr. Buckingham. Sterling was one of these purchasers; and the sale of the paper rapidly declined under the highly uncommercial management of the two unworldly friends. Maurice, depressed and out of health, resigned the editorship to Sterling in May, 1829, though he continued to render occasional help.

The first notice of an author, as yet quite unknown, though destined to extreme future fame, was in a review of Tennyson's Prize Poem, *Timbuctoo*, which obtained the Chancellor's Medal at Cambridge. The *Athenæum* may certainly congratulate itself on having written an opinion so discerning as the following:—"We have never before seen a prize poem which indicated really first-rate poetical genius, and which would have done honour to any man that ever wrote. Such, we do not hesitate to affirm, is the little work before us."

Whatever its literary merits, however, commercially the paper was a failure. Slight alterations—among which was a change in the day of publication, from Wednesday to Saturday—were tried, but without success. Sterling relinquished his share of the proprietorship, though he continued for a little longer to

act as editor, until, after various changes, on the 5th June, 1830, Charles Wentworth Dilke became the editor, taking upon himself the entire control. From this period may be dated the commercial success of the *Athenæum*, and the first number in 1831 opens with an address from the new editor, expressing his gratification at the increased sale, and his determination to conduct his publication in a spirit free from all corruption and partiality. In the following July he announced that the price of the paper would be reduced from eightpence to fourpence; and he greatly increased its sale thereby. In August he inserted an advertisement for a junior clerk, which was replied to by John Francis, who thus began a connection with the *Athenæum* which was only to cease with his death.

The first unknown writer of future celebrity under the new *régime* was Carlyle, who sent a poem, *Faust's Curse*, which was printed in the issue of January 7, 1832. Francis, in accordance with a well-known custom, announced it in the bill of contents for the week, and thus unintentionally exasperated the shy and irascible philosopher, whose diary records the fact thus:—"Last Friday saw my name in large letters at the *Athenæum* office in Catherine Street; hurried down with downcast eyes as if I had seen myself in the pillory. . . . Why yield even half a hair's-breadth to puffing? Abhor it, utterly divorce it, and kick it to the Devil." During this year, besides Carlyle, the contributors included the Ettrick Shepherd, Hood, William and Mary Howitt, Leigh Hunt, and Charles Lamb.

In July, 1837, Elizabeth Barrett* sent the following touching poem on the accession of the girl-Queen, then barely eighteen years of age:—

VICTORIA'S TEARS.

"O maiden, heir of kings,
A king has left his place ;
The majesty of death has swept
All others from his face.
And thou, upon thy mother's breast
No longer lean adown—
But take the glory for the rest,
And rule the land that loves thee best."
The maiden wept,
She wept, to wear a crown.

They decked her courtly halls—
They reined her hundred steeds—
They shouted at her palace gate
"A noble Queen succeeds !"
Her name has stirred the mountain's sleep,
Her praise has filled the town :
And mourners, God had stricken deep,
Looked hearkening up, and did not weep !
Alone she wept,
Who wept, to wear a crown !

She saw no purples shine,
For tears had dimmed her eyes ;
She only knew her childhood's flowers
Were happier pageantries !

* Afterwards Mrs. Browning. In November, 1846, Miss Elizabeth Barrett—then almost at the height of her poetic fame—married Robert Browning, so lately laid to his rest, with national honours, in Westminster Abbey. At the time of his marriage his works were known but to a very limited circle of admirers.

And while the heralds played their parts
For million shouts to drown—
"God save the Queen" from hill to mart—
She heard through all, her beating heart,
And turned and wept,
She wept, to wear a crown.

God save thee, weeping Queen,
Thou shalt be well beloved !
The tyrant's sceptre cannot move
As those pure eyes have moved !
The nature, in thine eyes we see
Which tyrants cannot own—
The love that guardeth liberties.
Strange blessing on the nation lies
Whose Sovereign wept,
Yea, wept, to wear its crown.

God bless thee, weeping Queen,
With blessings more divine !
And fill with better love than earth's
That tender heart of thine ;
That when the thrones of earth shall be
As low as graves brought down,
A pierced hand may give to thee
The crown which angels shout to see.
Thou wilt not *weep*
To wear that heavenly crown.

During the earlier years of the *Athenæum*, subjects were often dealt with in its pages which the multiplication of other newspapers would now, perhaps, render beyond its province. Among these questions were the subjects of taxes upon literature and the press, the removal of which the *Athenæum* persistently advocated ; postal reforms, the housing of the poor, the better condition of prisons, ragged schools, public

parks, and the reforms necessary for the improvement of the Irish.

As an amusing instance of the growth of literature in these days attention is drawn to the surprise excited by the size of Mr. Henry Bohn's catalogue of books in 1840, which was nearly five inches thick. And the compiler opportunely adds, "What would the writer say to the catalogue recently issued by Mr. Quaritch, which exceeds six inches, and to Mr. Whittaker's Reference Catalogue, eight inches in thickness!"

In 1846 the editorship of the *Athenæum* was entrusted to Mr. T. K. Hervey, and continued to prosper under the new rule. About this time Hepworth Dixon became a contributor. In this year also was published *Jane Eyre*, and the *Athenæum* is again to be congratulated on its discerning welcome it gave to the young writer. Miss Mulock, a little later on, also receives discriminating appreciation. In the early part of 1849 attention is drawn to the innovation in book-selling by Mr. Smith's plan of engaging all the bookstalls of the London and North Western Railway: a plan that, when first started, met with some animadversion from the trade, thinking it would thereby injure the sale of higher literature. The contrary proved to be the case, however. And on August 9th, 1851, the *Times* published an article on the "Literature of the Rail," commenting upon the fact that before Mr. Smith had acquired the sole right of selling books and newspapers at the London and North Western Railway, publications of the lowest possible character were chiefly to be purchased, whereas, under the new

management, every new book of interest as it appeared was placed upon the stalls, from Macaulay's *History of England* to Murray's *Colonial Library*. Fluctuations in the various sales, of course, arose—some of them as curious as they were unaccountable. "Stations were found to have their idiosyncrasies. Yorkshire is not partial to poetry, and it was difficult to sell a valuable book at any of the stands between Derby, Leeds, and Manchester. Religious books hardly find a purchaser at Liverpool, while at Manchester, at the other end of the line, they are in high demand." Mr. Smith braved all difficulties, however, until his firm has arrived at its present degree of success.

The death of Wordsworth, in 1850, had given rise to considerable discussion as to his probable successor for the Laureateship. From the first Tennyson's name had been mentioned. The *Athenæum*, however, suggested Mrs. Barrett Browning as the more suitable—a suggestion that, forty years ago, was even a stronger mark of the singular favour with which the *Athenæum* always regarded Mrs. Browning than it would be now, when recognition of female talent is of so much more common occurrence.

On July 16th, of this same year, fitting tribute is rendered to Sir Robert Peel, who had died on the previous Tuesday; attention being specially drawn to the sympathy he always felt with literary persons, and a detailed account given of the various pensions bestowed in the cause of literature during his administration. On November 3rd it was officially announced that Lord John Russell had conferred the Laureateship

on Tennyson; and, almost as if stirred by some disapproval of the choice, the *Athenæum* in its next number gave a long and most eulogistic review of Mrs. Browning's poems.

The Exhibition of 1851 occupied no inconsiderable place in the *Athenæum* of that year: "When was an Encyclopædia of knowledge like this ever edited by any hand before?"—it writes, "Here for the first time is a library to which all the world has contributed its living books." Articles appear on chemical exhibits, mining, metallurgy, food, music, sculpture, books, and printing.

Then came the literature of the Exhibition. The Official Catalogue contained upwards of 300 pages, and was sold at a shilling. It is stated in a footnote to *John Francis*, p. 264, that Sir John Bennett's advertisement occupied the back page of the Catalogue, for which he paid 1000 guineas, the largest sum ever given for any single advertisement.

In 1852 the Manchester Free Library—the first of its kind—was opened, commencing with a start of 21,000 volumes upon its shelves. The compiler of *John Francis* very rightly draws attention here to the fact that in 1886 the number of volumes has increased to all but 180,000 volumes.

In 1853 long notices are given of the third and fourth volumes of the *Memoirs of Thomas Moore*, by Lord John Russell. Articles appear also on July 2nd and 9th, on the "History of the Captivity of Napoleon at St. Helena," from the "Letters and Journals" of Sir Hudson Lowe, and "Official Documents not before made

public," by William Forsyth. The year's history of Arctic expedition includes the discovery of the Northwest Passage, by Captain M'Clure, and the search for Sir John Franklin. At the end of the year the editorship of the *Athenæum* was again to change hands. Mr. T. K. Hervey resigned, and was followed by W. Hepworth Dixon.

The great event of 1854 was the war with Russia, and the number of books reviewed by the *Athenæum* on the war exceeded eighty.

In June of this same year the Crystal Palace was completed; and the *Athenæum* gave a full description of the ten Courts, in a series of articles, commencing with the Pompeian Court, on January 21st, and concluding with two articles on the Courts of Modern Sculpture, on April 15th and 22nd. A full account, also, is given of the opening of the building by the Queen, on the 10th June. The number for March 18th, in this year, contains a long obituary notice of the well-known dramatist, Talfourd.

On April 8th reference is made to the Stamp Returns, which had been held back for three years, but were now issued to the public. Attention is drawn to the increase in the sale of the *Athenæum*, proved by these returns. In 1851 it only required 128,000 stamps, while in 1853 it rose to 147,000.

To the *Athenæum* also belongs the honour of suggesting a plan that was carried into practice by Professor Fawcett many years afterwards, viz., that girls and women should be employed in the Post Office. The idea primarily arose from the fact that

female labour was employed in the telegraphing of the Queen's speech on the prorogation of Parliament, in 1854, and the whole was accomplished with unusual celerity. "The girls were superintended by a matron telegrapher. Some of them, it is said, transmitted the speech at the rate of thirty-five words a minute. They sent the whole to the Continent, *vid* the Hague, in twenty minutes. The Electric Telegraph Company deserves commendation for setting this example. Why should not women be employed in other analogous cases—for example, in letter sorting? . . . Girls who could transmit thirty-five words a minute by electric telegraph would soon outstrip the lads whom we now employ in sorting letters."

On the 13th January, 1855, the death of Miss Mitford receives attention in a long and eulogistic notice. On the 7th of April of this same year there is an obituary of Mrs. Nicholls, better known as Charlotte Brontë. And the general literature of this year includes the third and fourth volumes of Macaulay's *England*, Tennyson's *Maud*, the completion of Thackeray's *Newcomes*, Kingsley's *Westward Ho!* and the first numbers of Dickens' *Little Dorrit*. The Crimean war occupies the *Athenæum* during a considerable part of 1856. Stray notes on Scott, Lamb, Coleridge, Mrs. Hemans, and Hogg conclude the first volume of *John Francis* and the *Athenæum*.

The second volume opens with the year 1857, and both that year and the following are largely occupied with the Indian Mutiny, that terrible event having naturally brought forth a host of literature devoted to

the subject. On June 19th of 1858, it is announced that "the attention of the proprietors of the *Athenæum* has been directed to the inconvenience caused by the increasing bulk of the yearly volumes. It has been represented to them that when the *Athenæum* started in its career its yearly volume consisted of 840 pages, whilst its contents last year extended to no less than 1644 pages. To meet the wishes of subscribers the proprietors have resolved that the *Athenæum* shall in future be paged in half-yearly volumes, and an enlarged index given with each volume."

The year 1859 was rich in literature, and included Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, George Eliot's *Adam Bede*, Mill's famous essay on *Liberty*, and Darwin's still more famous *Origin of Species*. Two successful magazines—the *Cornhill* and *Macmillan*—also date their existence from this year. On the other hand, we must not omit to record one great loss to literature that took place in 1859, Lord Macaulay. A short paragraph on the last day of the year runs thus: "At the moment of going to press we hear of the death of Lord Macaulay. To the world of letters this loss is immense. Time only permits us now to express our profound sorrow at an event which deprives us of so great a man. Next week we shall try to present some outlines of his career."

In 1861 Elizabeth Barrett Browning died, and the *Athenæum*, which had followed her career so sympathetically and admiringly, gave a long and appreciative sketch of her work and life, describing her as the "greatest of English poetesses of any time."

And on the 3rd of January, 1863, it announces with evident gratification that the municipality of Florence have done honour to themselves and the memory of Mrs. Barrett Browning by placing a marble slab in the wall of the house she occupied in that city. The slab bears an inscription in Italian to this effect: "Elizabeth Barrett Browning lived, wrote, and died in this house. She was a woman who with a woman's heart possessed the wisdom of a sage and the spirit of a true poet, and made her poetry a golden band between Italy and England."

On the 24th December, 1863, the evening papers announced that Thackeray had been found dead that morning in his bed; and on the 2nd of January, 1864, the *Athenæum* naturally devoted considerable space to his obituary notice. On the 6th of February the death of Adelaide Anne Procter is recorded, and she too receives fitting tribute. On the 10th August occurred a death of great importance to the *Athenæum*, Charles Wentworth Dilke. In accordance with his own special request no obituary notice was given in the journal in which he was so deeply interested, and only these lines at the commencement of the columns devoted to "Literary Gossip" announce an event so serious to the journal: "Died on Wednesday, August 10th, at Alice Holt, near Farnham, in his seventy-fifth year, Charles Wentworth Dilke, who was for many years connected with the *Athenæum*." The year 1865 is somewhat noticeable for the singular number of its losses to science; the African explorer, Dr. W. B. Baikie, receiving obituary notice on the 14th January,

though his actual death had occurred on the previous November. He was to be quickly followed by Admiral Fitzroy, Sir Joseph Paxton, Sir John William Lubbock, Isaac Taylor, Dr. Samuel P. Woodward, Sir William Hooker, Sir William Rowan Hamilton, and Dr. John Lindley.

The year 1866 opens with plans for the benefit of the working classes. On the 6th January it was announced that the Corporation of the City of London had voted the use of the Guildhall for the purposes of an Industrial Exhibition; and it was proposed to devote the surplus funds towards the establishment of a Free Public Library for the City. The extension of the Metropolitan railway system was still going on, and on the 17th March the *Athenæum* sounded a note of alarm in reference to the large investments being made by the general public in limited liability companies. Eight weeks from this warning a great commercial panic occurred. Overend, Gurney, & Co. stopped payment; the Bank Act was suspended, and on the following day the rate of discount was raised to ten per cent.

In April of this year died "the Laureate of our National Church," John Keble. Apropos of him an anecdote worthy to be included among the curiosities of literature is told, showing how difficult it is—not merely for an inexperienced author, but even for a publisher of wide experience—to gauge the commercial value of a book. John Henry Parker, who published the *Christian Year*, was astonished at its success, and is reported to have said that he might have purchased

the copyright for twenty pounds, but he did not consider the book worth the money. "Of this most successful book there were sold, from its first publication in 1827 to the expiry of the copyright in 1873, no fewer than 379,000 copies. The selling price of these was £56,000, and the sum paid to Mr. Keble, £14,000, being one-fourth of the retail price; a division of profits, we believe, quite unexampled in the publishing trade. It speaks well for both publisher and author that all the books written by Keble in the forty-eight years were published by Parker." An anecdote of a similar description is told a little later on with regard to the firm of Longman. "*Macaulay's Lays of Ancient Rome* was first published at 9s. 6d.; and Macaulay, never anticipating that the work would sell, made a present of the copyright to Mr. Longman, who most generously gave Lord Macaulay the full benefit of its great success." This production of his *Lays of Ancient Rome* made Lord Macaulay a veritable hero in the eyes of the booksellers; his *Essays* from the *Edinburgh*, the first two volumes of the *History*, and above all the second two issued on December 17th, 1855, which produced the celebrated cheque for twenty thousand pounds, were all of them events of magnitude in the annals of the trade.

The first number of the *Athenæum* in 1870, published on New Year's Day, opened with an interesting statistical essay on "The Literature of the People," the statistics having been especially prepared by John Francis. The general results of his investigations are as follows:—The little folk are among the best

patrons of popular literature. The higher class, but not the dearer sort, of nursery books have the greatest sale in the united markets of America, Canada, Australia, and England. Some of these works have, from a single publishing house, an issue to the amount of half a million yearly. The removal of compulsory stamps, excise and advertising duties, acted as a great impetus to the development of the Newspaper Press in England. To what that development has now reached is best to be seen in the fact that the yearly issue in London alone of newspapers published daily is almost eighty millions; while the number of copies of London weekly papers issued in the year numbers one hundred and twenty millions; thus making—weekly and daily—in round numbers a total of two hundred millions yearly! It is a fact gratifying and (at least to those who, like the present writer, are of strong individualistic tendencies, desiring that Protection and compulsory prohibition should be reduced to a minimum) pregnant with meaning, that it has been proved by these statistics that the best deterrent to the sale of unwholesome literature is the free introduction of literature that is healthy and innocent. After the repeal of the paper duty immoral literature went down rapidly in circulation. "One dirty source from which five dozen unclean publications issued in 1860 was closed in less than half a dozen years. . . . When a man discovers that he can get eight times as much of what it is pleasant to read at the same price he has to give for his thieves' novel of eternal sameness, he generally turns to the more wholesome

market, and offal is found to be scarcely saleable. It is on record that the little *Family Herald* absolutely extinguished *Varney the Vampire, or the Feast of Blood*, and other monstrosities of that sort. The *Leisure Hour* has, with equal success, run the highwayman's horse into a fence, and kept him with his head inextricably fixed in it. Chambers' publications, with those of publishers of works of a similar healthy tendency, superseded scaffold literature by helping to keep men away from habits that lead to the scaffold. The extensive circulation of such excellent publications as *Good Words*, *Good Words for the Young*, and the *Sunday Magazine* may be imagined by the fact that the paper required for the production of the above three magazines amounts to 336 tons a year, and that nearly five hundred persons are employed in connection with them!"

The death of Mr. Richard Bentley, the publisher, within a month of his seventy-eighth birthday, is noticed on the 16th September. In 1857 he had lost—by the decision of the House of Lords denying the right of copyright in this country hitherto supposed to be possessed by American authors—£16,000 to £17,000. This decision was reversed in a subsequent case, but no compensation was granted to Mr. Bentley by the Government.

The *Materia Medica of the Hindus*, compiled from Sanskrit Medical Works, by Udoy Chand Dutt, with a Glossary of Indian Plants, by George King, M.B., and the Author, was reviewed on the 28th July, 1877. The *Athenæum* describes this work thus:—"It is the first

book on the subject of Hindu medicine which we have had from a scientifically trained native physician, and the thoroughness with which Mr. Dutt has accomplished his work, and its great value and interest, prove what fruitful harvests we may hope to reap in the almost limitless fields of Sanskrit research, when once a sufficient body of Hindu students have been educated for the labour. Mr. Dutt has followed the Sanskrit texts literally, and gives in footnotes the original Sanskrit verses from which he quotes. In the selection of prescriptions he, as a rule, gives preference to such recipes as are commonly used by native physicians. The works from which he quotes extend in date from the fifth to the third century before Christ, to the fifteenth century A.D."

In this same book, there is a *note* to which the *Athenæum* rightly draws attention. "The MSS. examined have mostly been written on the paper of the country, sized with yellow arsenic and an emulsion of tamarind seeds, and then polished by rubbing with a conch shell." No insect or worm will touch this paper, and Mr. Dutt very properly suggests the advisability of Government records in Mofussil Courts being written on arsenicized paper instead of the ordinary English foolscap, which is so rapidly destroyed both by the climate and white ants.

On February 7th, 1880, there is an interesting review of the *Life and Work of Mary Carpenter*, by Estlin Carpenter; and towards the close of this same year a gratifying allusion to the remarkable progress of female education in India. On May 21st, 1881, it is announced

that "for the first time in the annals of the Calcutta University a native gentleman has been elected president of the Faculty of Arts. This honour has been conferred on the Hon. the Mahārāja Jotindra Mohan Tagore, C.S.I." International copyright between China and Japan is the subject of a paragraph on the 28th May of this same year, and allusion is also made to the question of newspaper copyright then occupying the attention of the Indian Government.

I do not propose in this short sketch to deal at greater length with the later pages of the *Athenæum*. The deaths of Dickens, George Eliot, Carlyle, all these are subjects of interest, no doubt, but they have been told admirably elsewhere, and are of sufficiently recent date to be familiar to most of us. The second volume concludes with the death of John Francis, which took place on the eve of Good Friday, 1882.

From the slight account given above it will be seen, I think, that these two volumes contribute both pleasant and profitable reading. It is instructive to view history—whether political or literary—by the light in which it was regarded by contemporaries, even though that light can hardly be as clear as that afforded by the later historian who has the advantage of a more defined perspective. Yet its negative teaching is almost as important as its positive. The pages of adulation bestowed upon Mrs. Browning, compared with the scanty space devoted to men who have so profoundly influenced this generation as Darwin and Spencer, show us how seldom contemporaries can recognize the greatness of writers who are in advance

of their times. Yet on the whole the *Athenæum* is to be congratulated upon the encouragement it gave to the early attempts of authors who subsequently proved themselves to be in the ranks of our *great*, though not perhaps our *greatest*, writers.

As an epitome of history reviewed in a contemporaneous light, these volumes are of much value, since much of the information collected here could with difficulty be found elsewhere.

*On the Philosophy of Vital Statistics
and the Necessity of an Accurate Census.*

SECTION I.

THE CENSUS OF GREAT BRITAIN.

IN view of the Tenth Decennial Census of Great Britain, now rapidly approaching, a brief sketch, based on official records, of the origin and history of the Census, together with some details as to its scope and aim, may be profitable.

No proposal to ascertain the number of the population by systematic enumeration appears to have been made till 1773, when a Bill was brought in by a member of the House of Commons (Mr. Potter) for "taking and registering an annual account of the total number of the people, and of the total number of births, marriages, and deaths, and also of the total number of the poor receiving alms from every parish and extra-parochial place in Great Britain." The Bill passed by a large majority through all its stages in the House of Commons, but was thrown out on the second reading in the House of Lords. The projector seems to have been discouraged by the virulence of its

opponents, and for nearly thirty years the scheme remained in abeyance.

The first Census was taken in 1801 under the superintendence of Mr. Rickman.* It showed the number of persons (distinguishing the sexes) in the various counties and parishes of Great Britain, the number of houses and families by which they were occupied, and a rough statement of the occupations of the people under three classes: first, persons chiefly employed in agriculture; second, persons chiefly employed in trade, manufactures, or handicrafts; and third, all other persons not comprised in the two preceding classes.

The Census of 1811 was taken upon the same plan as that adopted in 1801, the only difference being that in 1811 the number of families occupied in the three above-mentioned classes was shown instead of the number of persons, as in 1801; and in 1811 the number of houses building was shown separately from the numbers of other uninhabited houses.

In 1821 information was for the first time sought as to the ages of the population; but as it was left optional both to the Census officers and the parties themselves how far the investigation should be pursued, the return naturally proved somewhat unsatisfactory.

The Census of 1831 embraced several additional particulars, principally in elucidation of the various classes into which the people are divided by their different occupations. The inquiry as to the ages of the population was not repeated beyond the

* Dr. FARR'S *Vital Statistics*, edited by Noel A. Humphreys, p. 6.

distinction of males above and under 20. The area of each parish and township was given for the first time, being the result of a computation made by Mr. Rickman from maps.

At the Census of 1841 several alterations and additions were introduced. The number of families was not given, and no statement as to occupations made, as before, for each parish, nor was the previous classification adopted; but the ages of the population in parishes were shown in the two divisions of "under 20" and "20 and upwards," and the ages of the entire population of the country were shown under Counties, Hundreds, and large Towns, in quinquennial periods. The occupations of the people were exhibited under Counties and large Towns in detailed classification; and the population of Parliamentary Boroughs was supplied for the first time, the boundaries being those assigned in pursuance of the Reform Act.

At the Census of 1851, in addition to the inquiry concerning the occupation, age, and birthplace of the population, it was determined to ascertain the various relationships (such as husband, wife, son, or daughter), the civil condition (as married, unmarried, widower, or widow), and the number of persons blind, deaf, or dumb. There was, moreover, investigation, though of a purely voluntary character, into different places of worship and the number of persons attending them; also into the existing educational establishments, and the actual number of scholars under instruction.

In 1861 the Census of England and Wales was for the first time taken separately from that of Scotland,

the latter having then its own Registrar-General, to whom the taking of the Scotch Census was confided. The English Census differed in no material respect from that of 1851 as to the nature or extent of the information obtained, but no returns were asked for respecting the provisions for education or religious worship throughout the country, the religious worship returns of 1851 having given rise to much controversy. The classification of occupation was further improved, and a scheme for a comprehensive industrial Census was propounded by Dr. Farr.

The English Census for 1871 differs from that of 1861 so far as the information supplied by the householders' schedule is concerned, only to the extent of showing how many idiots or lunatics there were at the Census date, not merely in asylums for the special treatment of mental disorders, but at large throughout the country.

The Census Act of 1880 required that the Census of the following year should show the name, sex, age, rank, profession or occupation, condition as to marriage, relation to head of family, and birthplace of every living person who abode in every house on the night of Sunday, the 3rd of April, 1881, and also whether any were blind, or deaf, or dumb, or imbecile, or lunatic.

In the above short summary of the history of the English Census may be seen how great has been its development since its first beginning. Nor must be forgotten the fact that the Census is by no means confined to England, nor even to the British Dominions, and this should greatly enhance its

respective value in each nation in which it occurs; for subjects can only be comprehensively dealt with by being dealt with comparatively. And this is peculiarly the case with the present subject. Few studies can be less productive of good result than mere isolated details of vital statistics; whereas by being dealt with comparatively, *i.e.*, by the statistics of any given year or country being compared with those of other years and other countries, they become of supreme importance. The first country to undertake a Census based on a reliable method was Sweden, in 1749, and Censuses are now taken in Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, the United States of America, India, and most of the British Colonies. In Spain the census is taken also, but at irregular intervals.

It is the object of the present paper to remove some of the misconceptions that have gathered round this subject of the Census, to lessen the apathy with which it is generally regarded, and to rouse the householder into intelligent co-operation in furtherance of the end desired.

What, then, is the scope and aim of the English Census that our Government should think it necessary to spend over £122,000 to ensure it being done effectively, and to expend enormous mental labour in tabulating and comparing the results? It has an aim at once public and private. First, that the British Government shall obtain due knowledge of the number, classes, and distribution of the people entrusted to it; secondly, that each individual who

cares to apply the requisite study may learn for himself the rate of mortality prevailing at different periods of life, the healthiness or unhealthiness of various districts, the risk to life in different occupations, and rule his conduct accordingly. By this means he has light thrown upon what has been called the duration or expectation of life among the members of any given community, though he must not expect more than an approximate light. The ages of those who die are added up, and the sum is divided by the number of deaths, the quotient being the mean age at death. The rate of mortality differs in a generation as it passes through different ages. In infancy it is very high, in later childhood very low, and as men pass maturity is again rapidly accelerated. In all England at birth the mean duration of a man's life is only 41 years or thereabouts, but this apparently short term of years is owing to the fact of the large number of infants who die during the first year of life. It varies largely in different parts of England—in Liverpool, for instance, being only 26 years.

The after-lifetime, or expectation of life, of men in England at the age of 30 is 33 years by the English life table of the last census. Yet because the mean duration of an Englishman's life after he has passed youth is 63, no individual Englishman in present health could be certain that he will not survive that age. His occupation or pursuit in life, the healthiness or unhealthiness of the district in which he lives—all of which are parts of Census investigation—must be taken into consideration. The knowledge of a fact

leads to inquiry into its cause, very often into attempt at remedy. The district eventually may be made more healthy, the dangers of the occupation minimised, and so on. Yet even then he cannot be certain of more than an approximate or probable light thrown upon his future. There is only what is called a balance of probabilities. But upon the balance of probabilities all insurance offices and kindred societies are based, and have been found to work satisfactorily. We see, then, how very important it is that each individual shall, to the best of his ability, answer each question named in the Census accurately and fully. Each person on this occasion should look upon himself as a member of one corporate body, whose inaccuracies will be visited, not only upon himself, but upon the body at large.

One other care must be taken in dealing with this great subject of Vital Statistics. It is that in summing up the results we must be careful not to confuse coincidence with cause. It is sometimes said, "Statistics can be made to prove anything or nothing"; but that is not the fault of statistics, but of the confusion that arises from not being able properly to connect cause with effect. An illustration will show what I mean. Most of my readers will be aware that a good deal of controversy has lately arisen upon the justification of making vaccination compulsory, those in favour of compulsory vaccination asserting that the unvaccinated die in much larger numbers when they are attacked by small-pox than the vaccinated. Without entering into this question from a medical point of view, it is obvious that in

a country where vaccination is compulsory such statistics prove nothing. Who are the unvaccinated? In a country where every father is fined or imprisoned till he has his infant vaccinated it inevitably follows that, with very few exceptions, the unvaccinated are the children of tramps or gipsies, or those without settled occupation or home. Is it not probable that such children will die in larger numbers than those with homes, under the supervision of careful nurses and doctors, and this, whether their illness be measles, scarlet fever, or bronchitis, equally with small-pox? Again, it is sometimes said that with men the married state in England is more healthy than the unmarried, because the married have a longer duration of life. It may have this effect, but in an over-populated country like England statistics alone cannot prove it. Who are the married? Before a man can take upon himself the responsibility of marriage he must have the wherewithal to maintain a wife, and the naturally healthy and strong have a great advantage in the struggle for existence over the naturally feeble. Again, marriage depends largely upon opportunity of meeting, and chronic invalids seldom leave their own houses. Thus the married are generally selected from the healthier members of the community, and would naturally, and quite apart from the incidents of married life, have a lesser rate of mortality than the unmarried. Now, on the other hand, as a simple illustration of a case where statistics may be held conclusive, I will cite the English butcher, who, in the enumeration of the late Dr. Farr, has the highest

rate of mortality among all the trades. Seeing that the butcher is taken from about the same ranks of life as the greengrocer is taken, and that he is no more limited to specially unhealthy districts than they are, the fair inference here is that the greater mortality is really dependent upon some factor confined entirely to the incidents of the butcher's trade, and the late Dr. Farr rightly insisted that due attention should be paid to the discovery of what this factor is. Vital statistics are useless unless the important qualification, "other things equal," is allowed for. When due allowance is made for this their usefulness is, I believe, second to none. And I think the clergyman, schoolmaster, or head of a household could scarcely make better use of the short space of time before the occurrence of the tenth decennial Census than in imparting to those entrusted to their care full information, as simply told as may be, concerning the object of the Census, and impressing upon them the extreme importance of care and accuracy in their replies to the questions that they will have to answer.

There is no section of our subject more important than the accurate registration of the occupation of a people, and the comparative longevity in each. Correct statement of age, therefore, cannot be too strongly insisted on. Concealment of age—always foolish—becomes in the case of Census investigation reprehensible, seeing how easily the results gained at such cost and labour can be vitiated by individual inaccuracy and dishonesty.

At the time of the last Census the mortality of

butchers, fishmongers, and publicans exceeded the mortality of all other classes. The cause of this mortality in the two former classes is, or was, not fully known. A higher moral tone and greater self-control will almost certainly render the latter less fraught with danger. Coachmen, (not domestic servants,) and cabmen experience a high rate of mortality, chiefly due to drink, exposure to the weather, and accidents. But coachmakers of all branches, working in wood, iron, binding, or paint, up to the age of 45 experience a low rate of mortality; afterwards the mortality exceeds the average. They live in towns. Wheelwrights, working chiefly in wood, and scattered all over the kingdom, are healthy; their mortality is low at all ages. The same remark may be extended to carpenters, joiners, and workers in wood generally; their mortality is low; while that of blacksmiths, working in heat and iron, is somewhat high. The carver, gilder, plumber, and glazier suffer less than previously, though they still require further protection against the metallic poisons. Thanks to the late Lord Shaftesbury the wool, silk, and cotton manufacturing population no longer experience a very high mortality. Those working in wool are the healthiest. The mortality of mercers and drapers is rather above the average. Shoemakers at all ages, except 20-25 and at advanced ages, experience a mortality below the average. Tailors, on the contrary, die at rates above the average. Grocers, after 35, experience a low rate of mortality, and bakers are, on the whole, long lived.

The earthenware manufacture is one of the unhealthiest in the country. As might be expected, miners experience a heavy rate of mortality, chiefly from violent deaths. The mortality of gamekeepers, farmers, and agricultural labourers is very low.

When we come to deal with the higher trades and professional classes we find that the clergy of the Established Church, Protestant ministers, Catholic ministers, and barristers all experience low rates of mortality from twenty-five to forty-five; but after fifty-five the mortality of Catholic priests is higher. Solicitors experience the full average mortality after thirty-five. Physicians and surgeons, from youth up to forty-five, experience a mortality much above the average; after that age, though they do not approach the priesthood in health, they differ little from the average. Veterinary surgeons and farriers of the age of twenty-five and upwards experience a very high rate of mortality, higher than physicians or surgeons. Commercial clerks experience a high rate of mortality. Publishers and booksellers fare well in health and life, much better than their confederates, bookbinders and printers, who often work in badly ventilated rooms and die at a rate of mortality above the average.

Thus we see that in the upper middle classes publishers, clergymen, and barristers have the greater chance of long life; in the lower middle classes grocers, farmers, gamekeepers, shoemakers, workers in wood have a good chance of life; while among the very poor the occupation of agricultural labourer, in spite of it being

for the most part ill paid, is, nevertheless, conducive to long life. We see, then, how longevity varies according to the healthiness of surroundings; and this it is which makes accuracy of statement as regards age of such extreme importance in the decennial enumeration of a people. There is no reason to doubt that, just as certain occupations, formerly fraught with great danger, have been rendered comparatively harmless by the humanity and good sense of the late Lord Shaftesbury, so may the danger of other occupations be minimised if the attention of philanthropists and scientific men be called to them.

Next in importance to accuracy of statement as regards age is accuracy concerning the infirmities of a people. Distasteful as may be the answers to such investigation, a nation acts wisely in demanding information concerning the number of her lunatics, her blind and deaf mutes, in seeking to trace how far these "infirmities" can be connected with preventable causes, how far they are dependent upon heredity, upon environment, upon climate. International comparison being here of almost as much value as decennial comparison, I will conclude this sketch of the Census with three tables showing how the number of blind, lunatics, and deaf mutes differs in different countries. Doubtless these numbers must be taken with certain qualifications. The extreme difference, for instance, between the number of lunatics in India and England may be partly accounted for by remembering that in India the less severe cases of lunacy probably escape registration. Moreover, England, by

her humane and skilful treatment of lunatics, keeps alive many that nature, if left to herself, would probably destroy. Still, when all allowance is made, the number of English lunatics is a lamentable fact. Investigation should be made as to how far this excess of lunacy is dependent upon alcoholism, upon competition in the struggle for existence, upon the severe examinations to which growing boys and girls are subjected. Again, if England exceeds other nations in the number of her lunatics, India exceeds all other nations in the number of her blind. The hot climate and glare of the sun's rays may be held partly responsible; but it is to be feared that maternal neglect and general want of cleanliness during the early years of childhood cannot be left out of consideration. It is less easy to explain why deaf mutism should vary so greatly in different nations. There is reason to believe that upon this part of our subject there has been considerable inaccuracy as regards the returns.

The proportions per 100,000 persons of lunatics, blind, and deaf mutes are as follows:—

	Lunatics.	Blind.	Deaf Mutes.
England . .	130 ...	95 ...	51
France . .	97 ...	84 ...	63
Germany . .	82 ...	88 ...	97
Norway . .	116 ...	136 ...	92
Sweden . .	38 ...	81 ...	102
All India . .	35 ...	227 ...	86

A comparison between these figures and those of the forthcoming Census will be interesting and profitable.

SECTION II.

THE CENSUS OF BRITISH INDIA.

The year so soon now to dawn upon us, the year 1891, is that in which it is intended that the second great synchronous enumeration of all India shall be taken. It is true that in 1871-2 there was an attempt to obtain for the whole of India statistics of the age, caste, religion, occupation, education, and infirmities of the population. "Enumerations of the people had already been made in the North-West Provinces so far back as 1853 and 1865, in Oude in 1869, in the Punjab in 1855 and 1868, in the Hyderabad Assigned Districts in 1867, and in the Central Provinces in 1866; while in Madras quinquennial returns have been prepared since 1851-52 by the officers of the Revenue Department, giving with fair accuracy the numbers of the people in each district, and in British Burma a tolerably correct estimate was made each year for the purpose of the capitation rate." * But these enumerations of various Provinces and States, effected at different times, were also made by independent agencies. Until the Census of February, 1881, there had been "no attempt to secure uniformity in the arrangement of the statistics thus obtained." †

* *Memorandum on the Census of British India of 1871-72*, p. 1.

† Report on the Census of British India taken on the 17th February, 1881.

That Census, therefore, may so far claim the honour of being the first Census of British India in that it was the first taken at one uniform date and under one controlling authority. In the British Provinces it was effected directly under the control of the Government of India by the various local administrations; in the Native States the several Governments were in communication with and acted on the suggestions of the Census Commissioner. The Census of 1881 embraced, with the exception of Kashmir and the Colonies of France and Portugal, the entire Continent of British India, the following being the Provinces and States then dealt with:—

BRITISH PROVINCES.

Bengal with its feudatory States.
 N.W. Provinces with Oudh and feudatory States.
 Madras with its feudatory States.
 Bombay, ditto, ditto.
 The Punjab, ditto.
 The Central Provinces, ditto.
 Assam.
 Burmah.
 Berar.
 Coorg.
 Ajmere.

NATIVE STATES.

Rajputana.
 Central India.
 The Nizam's Dominions (Hyderabad).
 Mysore.
 Baroda.
 Travancore.
 Cochin.

We see, then, how very important should be considered the Census of 1881 to all those interested in the forthcoming Census. Few studies can be comprehensively dealt with till they can be dealt with comparatively. As has been well said, "Real knowledge consists not in an acquaintance with facts, which only makes a pedant, but in the use of facts, which makes a philosopher."* And this is peculiarly the case with the present subject. Few studies can be less productive of good result than mere isolated details of vital statistics; whereas by being dealt with comparatively, i.e., by the statistics of any given year or country being compared with those of other years and other countries, they become of supreme importance. It is the object of the present paper to remove some of the misconceptions that have gathered round this subject of the decennial Census, giving at the same time a slight sketch of its scope and aim—misconceptions that are not confined to India, but that exist in greater or less degree in many parts of Europe and America. It is true that in all districts save the very backward the superstitious dread of numbering the people is dying out; but in many cases fear of supernatural visitation has been succeeded by the equally baseless dread of human visitation in the shape of increased taxation; while in other cases—perhaps the majority—the whole subject is regarded with apathy.

What, then, is the scope and aim of the Census in India that the British Government should think

* BUCKLE'S *Posthumous Works*, vol. i. p. 58.

it necessary to spend over £156,000 to ensure it being done effectively, and to expend enormous mental labour in tabulating and comparing the results? It is, as we have already seen in our previous section on the Census of Great Britain, nothing less than that each individual who cares to apply the requisite study may learn for himself the rate of mortality prevailing at different periods of life, the healthiness or unhealthiness of various districts, the risk to life in different occupations, and rule his conduct accordingly. By this means he has light thrown upon what has been called the duration or expectation of life among the members of any given community, though he must not expect more than an approximate light. The ages of those who die are added up, and the sum is divided by the number of deaths, the quotient being the mean age at death. The rate of mortality differs in a generation as it passes through different ages. In infancy it is very high, in boyhood very low, and as men pass maturity is again rapidly accelerated.

The wideness of scope the Indian census of 1881 embraced may be seen by the number of subjects dealt with, which are as follows:—

TABLE I. Area and population.

- II. Movement of the population.
- III. The population classified by religion.
- IV. Relative proportions of the sexes, and main religious divisions.
- V. Civil condition of the population.
- VI. Civil condition and age of the population by religion and province.

- VII. Age of the population by religion and province.
- VIII. The languages of the population.
- IX. Birthplaces ditto.
- X. Educational statistics.
- XI. The insane.
- XII. The blind.
- XIII. The deaf mutes.
- XIV. The lepers.
- XV. The towns and villages classified by number of inhabitants.
- XVI. The towns exceeding 20,000 in population.
- XVII. The castes of the Hindoos.
- XVIII. The occupations of the people.

I. Hitherto it has been found very difficult to get more than an approximate idea of the population of India, owing to the extreme inaccuracy of the returns, chiefly to be traced to the erroneous notion that the sole object of the Census is taxation. In some cases there was a tendency to conceal the existence of old men and infants, because it would be peculiarly unfair to tax them. Women were looked upon as hardly worthy to be enumerated at all. It is to be hoped that the educational movement of the last ten years will have served to remove some of the misconceptions and apathy that have gathered round the subject, and thus make the returns of greater value. So far as they may be taken with this qualification, the entire population enumerated on the 17th February, 1881, was 253,891,821; the area occupied by this large population being 1,382,624 square miles. "There is considerable difficulty," says the Report

of 1881, "in making any fair comparison, as far as area goes, between Indian and European figures; and yet without some such comparison it is difficult for those to whom India is a strange country to form a correct idea of the vastness of its various provinces, or the great density of its huge population. In area it compares with no European state but Russia in Europe, which is to India as nearly 3 to 2 in size, that is, half as large again as India. But while Russia in Europe is thus larger in area, its population is infinitely smaller, ranking in the proportion of 2 to 7, or of 74,000,000 to 254,000,000."

II. The movement of the population can scarcely be dealt with till the Census of 1891 is before us. At present the chief means of knowledge is a comparison between the enumerations of the population in 1872 and 1881, but subsequent investigation has shown the Census of 1872 to be almost worthless.

III. At first sight it may seem that "Religion" should hardly fall within the scope of the Census, since religious belief is surely a matter between the individual worshipper and his God. But a little consideration will show that different forms of religion do greatly affect human welfare at large, and to that extent, therefore, must become an important factor in the great subject of Vital Statistics. In almost all religions, and especially in Oriental religions, Asceticism has always played a prominent part; and that great evil, Infant Marriage, is largely associated with religious belief. But if it can be found that in any religious sects fasting is carried to such an

extreme as to injure the health, solitary confinement indulged in till the mind becomes diseased, or that Infant Marriage is deteriorating alike to mother and offspring, then the question of religious investigation no longer comes within the domain of mere vulgar prying, but has an obvious relation to human welfare. And (in the judgment of the present writer) even such an association as that of which this *Indian Magazine* is the organ—pledged, that is to say, to non-interference with religion—would be justified in using every means, short of persecution, to convince religious persons that injuring the health or destroying the mind could hardly be acceptable to the Creator and Preserver of Life, whom, under one form or another, most religious people alike worship. Unfortunately all attempts at enumeration hitherto have been vitiated by the inaccuracy to which I have already alluded, especially as regards precision in definition. Mr. Ibbetson, in his Report on the Census of the Punjab, remarks upon the immense vagueness of the term *Hindu*. And Mr. Beverly, in his Report on the Census of 1872, says that this term has been made to embrace the most punctilious disciple of pure Vedantism, the agnostic youth, who is the product of Western education, and the semi-barbarous hill-man, who eats without scruple anything he can procure, and is as ignorant of the Hindu theology as the stone which he worships in times of danger and sickness. "Many of the peasantry honestly confess that they do not know by what religion they should call themselves: but every native who is unable to

classify his religion was classed as a Hindu. Prejudice and pride of caste added to the general inaccuracy. Many of the high-caste Hindus employed as Census enumerators objected to register those of debased castes as belonging to the Hindu religion. The Census agency not only made entries at variable discretion in such cases, but they carried preconceived notions to the extent even of dispensing with formality of inquiry and rejecting replies given." Those enlightened native gentlemen who have done, and are doing, so much to elevate their countrymen and countrywomen, and who have parted with so many of their ancient prejudices, must learn the great lesson which, in common with many Europeans, they require to be taught, viz., that in the great scheme of nature nothing is so common or unclean that it can be passed over with contempt; that if physical or mental disease attack all classes equally where the conditions are the same; so if we would wish the coming Census to be of the service it might be, the lowest pariah must be considered as important a factor in the forthcoming registration as the highest Brahmin. At present, so far as the general inaccuracy will make the enumeration of any value, in 1881 the Hindus formed virtually three-fourths of the entire population; the remaining one-fourth being thus distributed: Eight-tenths are Mohammedans, one-tenth aboriginals, and of the remaining one-tenth the Buddhists form nearly one-half; of the remaining one-twentieth the Christians and Sikhs in equal numbers comprise six-tenths, the Jains constitute two-tenths, the Satnamis and Kabirpanthis

three-twentieths, and the Parsees, Jews, Brahmos, and unspecified make up the remainder.

IV. The proportion of the sexes in India is a question of the highest importance. It is well known that in Europe more boys than girls are born; the excess being highest in Italy, where the male births are in the ratio of 107·1 to 100 females, and the lowest in England and Wales, where the male exceed the female births in the proportion of 103·9 to 100. Owing to the greater force of life in the female, and the greater risks to life in masculine occupations, the proportion in adult life of the sexes is reversed in Europe, the women exceeding in number the men. In India there seems at first sight a remarkable contrast in this proportion, especially with regard to adult females, who were largely outnumbered by the males. Subsequent investigation, however, seems to prove that the inequality lay chiefly in the Census returns. "There has been a uniform concealment of females, especially between the ages of 10 and 13." Nevertheless, as early marriages and female infanticide* must assuredly affect the female population, more accurate researches may bring about a different conclusion. Perfect accuracy both as regards the returns of female births and female age cannot be too strongly inculcated upon those anxious for the welfare of native women.

* It is right that I should explain the modified way in which I use the term *infanticide*. The investigations of the Census Commissioners have led them to the conclusion that female infanticide has almost died out; but that female children are treated with gross neglect. Thus, though they are no longer actually killed, they are certainly allowed to die.

V. and VI. When we come to the consideration of the civil condition of the people we are struck with one remarkable contrast between it and the civil condition of our own people. In England and in most European countries the marriage rate is a measure of prosperity. Though there is still too much improvidence among our lower classes, yet that prudence forms a larger factor in the civil condition of our people than is generally recognized is shown by the fact that the marriage rate falls or rises according to the commercial depression or prosperity of each particular year; and that though early marriages still unfortunately take place, yet the mean average rate at which English men and women severally marry is $25\frac{1}{2}$ and $24\frac{2}{10}$ years according to the register. In India, especially as regards women, no such measure of prosperity can be formed from the marriage rate. Religious, not commercial, considerations govern female marriages in India; or, to speak more correctly perhaps, hereditary custom, which has a greater tenacity of life than even the most deep-rooted religion. I need not enlarge to readers of this magazine upon the evils of early and enforced marriages. The subject is at last exciting the attention needed. In point of age they vary, though only slightly, in different districts and different sects. How indigenous to the soil are these early marriages, how much more they have to do with custom than religion, is shown by the fact that native Christians busy themselves to find husbands for their daughters immediately they attain the earliest age (12) at which marriage, with consent of parents,

is legal. In the forthcoming Census it seems (to the present writer) important that the age of husband and wife should be given, not as used to be the custom, as it is at the time of the matrimonial contract, but of the actual union.

VII. In dealing with the age of the population the first thing that calls for remark is that whereas the mean duration of life at birth in all England is about 41 years, that in all India is only 23 years. All through life there is a certain excess in the English proportions. But it is at birth that the Indian figure is so extremely low, thus showing how great must be infantile mortality.

The next thing worthy to be remarked is the preponderance of females over males up to four years of age. Up to this age to every 1000 boys there are 1034 girls. Then from 5 to 9 years of age there are but 927 girls to 1000 boys. While from 10 to 14 the decrease is terrible. For every 10 boys there are less than 8 girls! How far this loss of female children is actual, or how far merely nominal, and to be explained by concealment of females, should be an important factor for investigation in the forthcoming Census. In this part of our subject much is to be desired as regards accuracy. Many are ignorant of their own age. There seems also a strange inclination on the part of natives to return the numbers of years that they have lived in multiples of fives. For some reason—apparently not yet understood—Buddhists conceal their women in a more marked degree than any other part of the population.

The limits of this paper force me to pass over the divisions of the subject devoted to the Languages and Birthplaces of the population and proceed to Section X., the very important question of Educational Statistics.

"The enumerators," says the Report, "were directed to ascertain what persons were 'under instruction,' or were 'not under instruction but able to read and write,' or were 'not under instruction and unable to read and write.'" There seems to be less complaint of inaccuracy in this part of our subject. I will give the figures, therefore, at some detail, trusting that when a comparison is made between them and those of the next Census a marked improvement may be found. In 1881, allowing for infants of tender years too young to be at school, out of every 1000 males only 104 were able to read and write, or were under instruction. If no allowance is made for children of this early age, the proportion under instruction, and able to read and write, in every 1000 males was 91. Burmah is the only Indian country where the majority of males were instructed. There 532 of every 1000 males were able to read or write, or were at school. In Madras we find the next highest proportion, though the drop from the Burmah figure is large, the Madras figure being 158 in every 1000. Of the larger provinces Bombay comes next with 127, then Bengal with 102, the Punjab with 72, and the North-West Provinces 66. In 1881 Female Education was almost non-existent.

The following Table, taken from the *Report of the Census of the Indian Empire*, vol. i. p. 230, of the

percentage of Education for all India by religions, may be of interest, and will certainly be instructive when compared with the forthcoming Census:—

	MALES.		FEMALES.	
	Unable to read or write.			
Hindus . . .	91·0	...	99·8	
Mohammedans . .	94·1	...	99·7	
Aboriginals . .	99·6	...	99·9	
Buddhists . . .	50·8	...	96·8	
Christians . . .	62·7	...	83·6	
Sikhs	91·8	...	99·8	
Jains	51·8	...	99·4	
Satnamis	99·2	...	99·9	
Kabirpanthis . .	97·9	...	99·9	
Nat worshippers .	93·8	...	98·8	
Parsis	27·1	...	63·1	

Thus we see that to the Parsis belong the honour of having the largest number of instructed members. More than 72 per cent. of their males and more than 36 per cent. of their females can read and write. The male Buddhists come next, having 49 of their members who can read and write, but only about 3 per cent. of their women can do so. The Jains possess more than 48 per cent. of males who can read and write, but practically no women. The various Christian denominations can boast of over 37 per cent. among their males who can read and write, and more than 16 per cent. among their females, thus ranking fourth among the educated males and second among educated females.

Of course these statistics are limited to those of the

school-going age, and deal therefore with the mere rudiments of knowledge. It is probable that could there be statistics of the higher learning among adults the Hindu—so remarkable for generations for his devotion to learning—would not thus lag behind the Parsis and Buddhists. Probably, too, allowance must be made for a fact I alluded to in a preceding section, that every native who does not know how to classify his religion is classed as a Hindu. With regard to female education, it has been suspected that now and then ladies of the higher ranks, who can read and write, have concealed their knowledge, fearing it might be considered a pedantry improper to their sex by their male relatives. It is seldom that we can expect entire reliability in any statistics; but on the whole the Statistics of Indian Education have shown themselves to be so generally trustworthy that I have thought it worth while to enter into them at some detail.

XI. In comparing the number of insane in India with those in European countries, India may congratulate herself upon her much smaller proportion; although it is probable that a more correct registration may bring out a slight excess of the present numbers. The Report thinks it almost certain that the more harmless forms of lunacy have escaped registration hitherto in India. Still, when all due allowance is made, Europe has something to learn from India. In the latter intemperance is rare, and a large proportion of European insanity is to be traced to alcoholism. Moreover, life being more primitive and wants fewer, there is less strain in competition

and struggle for existence. The proportions of lunatics per 100,000 persons are as follows :—

England	130
France	97
Germany. . . .	82
Norway	116
Sweden	38
All India	35

When we seek to classify insanity in India according to the different religions we are struck by the fact that the Buddhists and Nat worshippers head the list for their high proportion of insane members. Buddhists and Nat worshippers, however, are virtually identical with the population of Burmah, and it would be instructive if investigation could prove in what degree this insanity is to be traced to practices pertaining to religion or to other causes. The Parsis rank next in the number of their insane. Then at some distance the Mohammedans and Christians. Hindus have the comparatively small proportion of 29, and the Jews only 25. The Aborigines have little over 14.

XII. When we come to the consideration of the proportion of blind it is a lamentable fact that India heads all European nations. To a certain extent the excess is comprehensible and may be explained by the glare of the sun for nine months out of twelve. But it is to be feared that want of cleanliness and general attention to the eyes—especially during the early months of infancy—has much to answer for in this terrible excess. It is to be hoped that the educational movement now spreading among native women will have helped to teach them that there is no duty so

sacred to woman as providing for the welfare of the child she has brought into the world, and that the forthcoming Census may show a considerable decrease in the number of young children afflicted through maternal neglect with the terrible deprivation of sight. In 1881 the average number of blind per 100,000 of population in various countries was as follows :—

England	95
France	84
Italy	105
Belgium	81
Germany	88
Hungary	120
Denmark	79
Norway	136
Sweden	81
Switzerland	76
All India	227

Thus in all India there are more than twice as many blind as in England. But, says the Report, the all-India figure is modest by the side of the Punjab, which shows more than five times as many as England, and quite five times as many as Italy, 525 to 105. The proportions of the blind vary in different religions. The Sikhs show quite abnormal figures, 465 per 100,000, or more than twice the average of all India. The Jains stand next with 314. Then come the Mohammedans with 254, these being the only religions save the Satnamis (231) where the proportions are higher than the Indian average. Throughout the various beliefs the prevalence of blindness among adult females is noticeable, the only instance where the sexes are at all on a level being among the Buddhists. The excess

varies with each religion, but taking one with the other, to every 100 blind females there are but 90 blind males; Christian and Hindus, strange to say, being precisely the same, *i.e.*, 88 blind males to 100 blind females. It seems therefore probable to the present writer that this excess of female blindness over male being so constant, and on the whole so evenly dispersed among all the religious sects, has little to do with religious customs, but much to do with the miserable surroundings of female life in India. Much weeping, it is known, is bad for the eyes, and anything that tends to depress the general health affects the crystalline lens of the eyes, so that it is not difficult to understand why absolute loss of sight is more frequent in women than in men when we come to consider how much harder, both physically and mentally, is the fate of Indian women.

XIII. The statistics of deaf mutism compare much more favourably with European figures than those of blindness, the comparative rates of deaf mutes per 100,000 being as follows:—

England	51
France	63
Italy	74
Belgium	44
Germany	97
Hungary	134
Denmark	62
Norway	92
Sweden	102
Switzerland	245
All India	86

The disproportion between the two sexes in respect of the number of persons who are afflicted with deaf mutism is as remarkable here as it was in the case of blindness, but whereas the blind females largely exceeded the blind males, the reverse is the case with the sexes in regard to deaf mutism. In all India there are 103 male deaf mutes per 100,000 males, to 67 female deaf mutes per 100,000 females, and in no single province are there more female than male deaf mutes. Among the Sikhs the disproportion is remarkable, where out of 100,000 on total population of the same religion there are 210 males to 100 females. The Christians show the same proportion of deaf mutes among both sexes, while the Jews have actually 478 male deaf mutes to every 100 female deaf mutes. The Hindus and Mohammedans maintain the same proportion: 153 males to every 100 females so afflicted. In our present state of knowledge it is difficult to account for this strange disproportion. The writer of the Report is inclined to the belief that the statistics of deaf mutism may not be altogether trustworthy.

XIV. The average proportion of lepers is 57 in every 100,000 throughout India, the proportion varying from 13 in Mysore to 140 in Berar. The males largely outnumber the females; Ajmere and Bengal with 3 to 1, and Berar with 7 to 2; Coorg being the only province where the figures for the two sexes are at all on a level. Due allowance, however, must be made for probable concealment, when possible, of females suffering under this terrible malady.

Examined by religion, the Kabirpanthis show the

highest proportion, 77 per 100,000, the other religions being as follows per 100,000:—

Buddhists	70
Nat worshippers	67
Hindus	60
Christians	56
Jews	51
Mohammedans	50
Satnamis	43
Parsis	39
Aboriginals	33
Jains	22
Sikhs	19

Within the limits of this paper it is impossible to touch upon the vast subjects comprised within sections XV., XVI., XVII., the castes alone numbering many thousands.

XVIII. There is no section of our subject more important than the accurate registration of the occupations of a people and the comparative longevity in each. The results of the Census of 1881 with regard to occupations statistics were most unsatisfactory. The Census Commissioner for India, Mr. J. A. Baines, has quite recently drawn attention to the fact that the attempt to obtain a complete return of those who actually work as distinguished from those who are supported by others, in spite of clear instructions to the enumerators, notoriously failed, and the highly important question of the relative strength of the agricultural class, for example, was treated on a different basis in each province. In the forthcoming Census, therefore, the important modification is proposed of the substitution of the population

subsisting by an occupation for that exercising or nominally exercising it. Even in our country we must be careful in giving more accurate descriptions of means of livelihood. Confusion would be caused, for instance, if non-practising barristers—gentlemen of large private means who have qualified themselves for the title of barrister without any intention of practising—return themselves in the forthcoming Census as “barristers,” without the qualifying clause “non-practising” be added. Obviously the results of the healthiness or unhealthiness of the legal profession must be greatly vitiated if the actual and nominal barristers are classified together. But this confusion of actual with nominal workers is frequent in India. For instance, 246 males were returned in the last Census as ministers, clergymen, and priests, who were afterwards found to be children under ten years of age, and 55 under that limit were represented as engaged in mercantile pursuits; the probable explanation of this return being that these children were destined for those professions when they should be old enough to exercise them.

In conclusion, I must again impress upon my readers the great advantage it would be if the native population at large could be roused to take an intelligent interest in the forthcoming Census. Whatever the improvements—and important ones are proposed—in the method of registration and instructions to enumerators, it is obvious that the results gained at such vast cost and labour could easily be vitiated by individual inaccuracy and dishonesty.

Charles Bradlaugh: an Appeal.

IN view of the exertions that are now being made on behalf of the late Charles Bradlaugh's estate, which has been left encumbered with debt resulting from unjust litigation, a few details as to the circumstances of the debt, together with a brief sketch of one whom many at the time of his death were beginning to love and respect, even while they differed from him, may be acceptable to the readers of this review.

Charles Bradlaugh was born on September 26th, 1833, and was the son of a solicitor's clerk. His father, though very poor, possessed sufficient literary tastes and education to enable him to become a contributor of articles and sketches to the *London Mirror*. His little son, Charles, was seven years old before he was sent to a National School in Abbey Street, Bethnal Green, and he only remained there four years. At twelve he obtained employment as errand boy in the office where his father worked as clerk, which occupation he changed at the end of two years for that of cashier and wharf-clerk to a firm of coal merchants.

Strange as it may seem to those who are not familiar with the fact that great heretics are generally made from those who have by nature fervent religious

emotions, Charles Bradlaugh, at this early period of his life, was an unusually religious child. He had been educated in strict Church of England views, and his boyish piety so attracted his pastor that he made him a Sunday School teacher. At fifteen, when preparing for confirmation, the boy was told to study the Gospels and the Thirty-nine Articles. Even at this early age he had within him what his biographer says afterwards became his "master quality," viz., a "fiery rectitude."* His study of the Gospels and Articles led him to perceive contradictions hitherto unnoticed by him. In all honesty he went to his clergyman for a solution of his difficulties, and, in reply, received suspension from his office of Sunday School teacher for three months, and the information that a severe letter would be sent to his father.

As yet young Bradlaugh could scarcely be called a *doubter*, for though conscious of religious difficulties, he had a sort of boyish, simple faith that they must be capable of solution, could he only find the right person to whom he might apply. Failing this he set to work to study still more deeply for himself. Perhaps the very difficulties that were fast growing upon him may have made him cling with a certain generosity of defence to the religion in which he had been educated, for at the age of sixteen we find him embracing the part of defender in a public discussion with a Free-thinker on the Inspiration of the Bible. In the contest his opponent came out conqueror; and it was characteristic of the "fiery rectitude" inseparable

* See Preface to BRADLAUGH'S *Labour and Law*, p. xviii.

from his character that being conquered he should at once come forward and acknowledge his defeat.

The next stage in his career, occurring very nearly at the same period of his life, was the advocacy of the then unpopular cause of teetotalism. Boy as he was, he had seen enough of life to convince him that much of the vice and misery of the poor could be traced to drunkenness. With a certain simple trustfulness that his former pastor might be willing to weigh impartially the arguments for and against teetotalism, he besought him to read Robert Taylor's *Diegesis*. On receiving the request the clergyman immediately consulted, not only with the boy's father but with his employer, the result being that young Bradlaugh found himself advised to change his opinions within three days or he would lose his situation. Unable to alter his opinions at command he left both home and situation on the third day, and after a year of struggles and vicissitudes, during which time he lodged with the widow of Richard Carlile and managed to study Hebrew, Greek, Arabic, and French, he enlisted in the army, where he remained till he was past twenty. A legacy that came to him on the death of an aunt enabled him to buy himself out. On once more reaching London he found that during his absence his father had died, and his mother in need of his assistance. The only occupation that offered itself—notwithstanding his strong physique and six feet of height, notwithstanding, too, his knowledge of languages and more than average ability—was post as errand boy in a lawyer's office at ten shillings a week.

Happily his master was a liberal-minded man who soon perceived the "errand boy's" intelligence. Young Bradlaugh gradually rose to be managing clerk in the office, and probably here laid the groundwork of the great knowledge of the law that he afterwards exhibited, while under the pseudonym of "Iconoclast" he still continued his Freethought propaganda.

Very gradually thinking persons have learnt to recognize that a man, so long as he has devoted careful study in his search for truth, is not responsible for the conclusions to which that search has led him. But the assertion is still frequently made, "If a man cannot think on vital subjects as others think, at least he can keep his thoughts to himself." And such as these affirm that they quarrel with Bradlaugh not for holding, but for divulging his opinions. As well might they quarrel with Latimer, or Knox, or Luther for not keeping their opinions to themselves! In every age amid a large majority who do not think at all, amid a large minority who, though they dissent from the current creed, will not avow their unbelief, there is always a sprinkling of earnest men, filled with fervour, enthusiasm, faith, who feel impelled through evil or good report to bring home to men the higher rule of life they believe themselves to have found. It may seem strange to associate that word "Faith" with one like Bradlaugh; but the association is his own, not mine. Though rejecting the current creed he had much faith; "Faith," as he expresses it, "more than many." He had faith in the improvement of humanity, faith in the search for truth, faith above all in the good

that must result from leading the absolutely honest life—honest not as the world counts honesty, but honesty of thought and purpose as well as of word and deed. It was not enough, for instance, for a man to refrain from professing an opinion he does not hold; he is not justified even in holding it till he has assured himself by every possible investigation of its truth. Then, and not till then, should it be accepted by him, much less preached.

The current idea that Bradlaugh waged war against religion is, I think, a mistake. He only warred with religious bigotry. He would have no religious sect forcibly put down. He only desired that side by side with the Jew, Quaker, and Catholic his own sect should have fair play, and the disabilities of Secularism removed. Through his courage and pertinacity his cause has been won, though at the cost of much persecution during his life and impoverishment of his estate after his death from the litigation forced upon him; but I think it due largely to his exertions that freedom of thought is, comparatively, so unfettered now. How far he did both himself and his cause injustice by the employment of the word *Atheistic* as the denomination of his sect is, I think, a question that may fairly be asked. For his intellect was surely too penetrating for him not to be able to see that for a finite being, a speck in the ocean of space and time, dogmatically to deny an Infinite Power, is as arrogant as unphilosophical. But he was, in the fullest sense of the word, a Secularist. He did not believe in special providences or miraculous interpositions, neither did he

believe in future rewards or punishments, save those brought about as the consequences of human action and endeavour. The "Fatherhood of God"—the favourite doctrine of the Theist—he absolutely denied; and "fatherhood" being a concrete, human quality, perfectly comprehensible to all who use it, there is no arrogance in such denial. It is a question to be dealt with like other questions, upon the facts. In the cruel diseases that assail infants and animals, in common with human adults, who may, perhaps, have deserved them, or know how to profit by them; in the famines and earthquakes in which the innocent perish with the guilty; in the brutalities of war, where from the dawn of history the weak have fallen a prey to the strong, however piteous their appeal for aid from above, are hardly to be seen the signs of a human father's love towards his children, still less of the superhuman pity of a Divine and Omnipotent Father towards them. With such facts before him Bradlaugh gradually drew the conclusion that man must work out his salvation for himself; that the means to this end lay not in propitiation or sacrifice or prayer to any supernatural power, but in self-reliance, self-control, studious investigation of the laws of his own being and his own environment. The making of this world better and happier, therefore, was the goal to be attained, and to which our highest virtues should be directed, not from the hope or dread of future reward or punishment, but as an end in itself. This is Secularism, it is true; yet I think it is a doctrine that may be accepted by, and prove beneficial to, many who dissent from

Mr. Bradlaugh's other conclusions. For whether with him we reject the possibility of personal immortality altogether, or whether with the agnostic we refuse to give an opinion upon what seems like insufficient data, or whether with Eastern religionists we believe in a succession of worlds, it is only of this world we have any personal knowledge. Whether we are finite or infinite beings (to the present writer it seems that that which is incapable of corruption cannot be capable of generation, and that therefore we must be one or the other) we have no remembrance of any past life, nor, granting that we had a past life, any knowledge of its duties. In like manner, supposing there to be a future world in store for us, we are in absolute ignorance of its duties, and even of its whereabouts. Of this world we know much, and may in time know greatly more. Of other worlds we know nothing, nor at present does there seem any likelihood of our increasing our knowledge. This "higher Secularism" is, I think, a gospel that may be well preached to persons of every nation and of all creeds. If this life is the only one, all the greater reason that we should live it nobly and well. If, on the other hand, another is in store for us, time enough for us to think of those future duties when we know what they are. We shall perform them, presumably, none the less well because we have lived our highest in the world just left.

Mr. Bradlaugh was frequently reproached with being a destroyer rather than a builder up, and the reproach sometimes pained him. Perhaps his pseudonym of Iconoclast, in his youthful days, may have lent colour

to the accusation. He was a destroyer, it is true, but he always averred that destruction was a means, not an end. He wished to make men follow substance rather than shadows, and he could not do this without first breaking down the barrier of superstitions that lay in his way. Yet the only weapons he ever used were those of fair discussion. He did not like the word *toleration*, for toleration, he said, implied superiority. A Jew should no more tolerate a Christian than a Christian a Jew; but while each should hold manfully to what he believes to be the truth, each should work for the common good side by side with the other. Where there are many minds there will be many opinions; but though absolute truth may be unattainable, relative truth will certainly be furthered by freedom of discussion from persons of all forms of belief or unbelief.

Closely allied to his religious convictions were his political. He desired justice and fair play for all classes; or, to use his own words, he worked "for good, for liberty, for redemption, for all without distinction of colour, of skin, of race or type, but for one common humanity." This strong spirit of justice rendered him entirely above that common fault of men of the so-called revolutionary type—hatred of the class above their own. All class hatred was equally pernicious in his eyes, whether the hatred of the rich for the poor, or the poor for the rich. He worked chiefly for the people, it is true, because they were most in need of his help; but that the motor power within him was keen sense of justice, and not

class feeling, may be seen by the way he pleaded for a fair trial to the Maharaja of Kashmir.

It was this same sense of justice within him that made Mr. Bradlaugh an anti-state socialist. His individualism in politics he carried almost as far as Herbert Spencer. Human nature he perceived to be very much the same beneath all accidents of class. As in the days when parliamentary power was almost exclusively in the hands of the wealthy and landed classes, history had shown that there resulted a system of monopolies, perpetual pensions, laws solely protective of the landed classes; so personal experience was showing him that now when democracy is in the ascendant a like spirit is beginning to exhibit itself. For what is the meaning of monopolies, of state patronage or sinecures, save a wish on the part of the idle and extravagant to live upon the earnings of the industrious and thrifty? And what is the meaning of the state-socialistic propaganda—of Free Dinners, of Free Education, of Free Libraries and Hospitals—but that the idle and incapable and thriftless shall sponge upon the earnings of the provident, the intelligent, and industrious? And dangerous to the well-being of a community as is an idle and extravagant aristocracy, Mr. Bradlaugh had studied history far too deeply not to be convinced that an idle and improvident democracy is even more dangerous, because of the superiority of its numbers.

When Charles Bradlaugh braved stoning, mobbing, hooting; when he submitted to exile from his father's house in the cause of secularism, he showed himself a

courageous man ; but it required a higher, subtler kind of courage when, after having lived down obloquy, and gaining the respect of both sides of the House, over whom alike the socialistic wave was spreading, he could sit down and deliberately resolve to write the book which, alas ! he did not live to see through the press—*Labour and Law*. To be an Ishmael with one's hand against everyone because everyone's hand is against oneself, requires chiefly physical courage ; but to be a writer of a book that will probably offend, not only the supporters of his own class, but the members of the House who were gradually beginning to avow their belief in the nobility of one formerly exciting their hatred, was an act of high moral courage, and could only have arisen from strong conviction of the necessity for so writing. His study of history had convinced him that, with few exceptions, the State's love of prohibitive interference had exerted a pernicious influence upon the welfare of the people ; but seldom had any of the actions of the State seemed to him so fraught with danger as when it contemplated arrogating to itself the right to say to the industrious man, anxious to work for his children and his own old age, "Eight hours shalt thou work and no longer." Not that Mr. Bradlaugh held money-making to be the aim and end of existence. On the contrary, he expresses himself "in favour of the shortest possible hours of labour being worked in each industry. But," he adds, "*the measure of possibility is the profitable conduct of the industry.*" The shortest number of hours possible in any industry ought to be known to, and in any case

should be most easily ascertained by, the employers and employed engaged in such industry." It is almost impossible for the State to arrive at the necessary knowledge; yet even waiving this difficulty, "Parliament ought not to legislate on matters on which the people are, or reasonably ought to be, able to protect themselves," for she "should do nothing to lessen that spirit of self-reliance which makes society progressive wherever it prevails." The function of the Legislature, in his opinion, should be "the preservation of internal peace, the removal of all legal restrictions which hinder equality of opportunity, the protection of each individual against the criminal acts of other individuals, and the protection of all citizens against foreign enemies. It should encourage and, where possible, facilitate individual activity and initiative."* When the State does more than this she generally does harm, for, to use his own terse aphorism, "the swimmer needs clear stream, not weedy trammel."

His opinions on the question of wages were very much the same as upon the hours of labour. While with the latter he desired the shortest number of hours possible; maintaining that leisure, in excess of mere sleep, rest, and nourishment periods, is necessary for the physical and mental well-being of the worker, yet fully perceiving that the "measure of possibility could only be the profitable conduct of the industry"; so with wages. He was an advocate for the highest possible wage; but here, too, the only measure of possibility was the profitable conduct of

* *Labour and Law*, p. 81.

the industry, and this could best be known to the employers and employed engaged in each particular industry.

Few thoughtful persons will arise, from a careful perusal of *Labour and Law*, without being impressed with the consciousness of the great loss the English nation has sustained in the comparatively early death of its writer, of the grave mistake the House of Commons committed in allowing so many sessions to pass before it would accept the services of one so able and willing to work for it. When sufficient time shall have elapsed for the nineteenth century to be viewed in due perspective, there will be few of its actions, I believe, more reprehended by posterity than its behaviour to one whose only offence lay in that, having long and earnestly sought for some moral solution of the vice and misery of the world, he honestly avowed the failure of his search.

I know no speeches of modern days more dignified and pathetic than the four speeches of Charles Bradlaugh pleading at the Bar of the House of Commons for permission to do the work so necessary to be done, and which he felt within him,—as has been amply proved by the result,—he could do so well. In the efficacy of Parliament he had, I think, a stronger faith than the majority of his fellow-individualists. To use his own words, he “had always taught, preached, and believed in the supremacy of Parliament.” This being so, it was characteristic that he would accept no defeat, cease from no exertion, till he had obtained entrance into that House from which he believed he

could find best opportunity for doing the work he had set himself to do.

He stood before the Bar of the House of Commons the chosen of a constituency; no petition against his return; no impeachment of that return. "No more ashamed of my own opinions," he informed the members, "which I did not choose, opinions into which I have grown, than any member of this House is ashamed of his; and much as I value the right to sit here, and much as I believe that the justice of this House will accord it me before the struggle is finished, I would rather relinquish it for ever than that it should be thought that by any shadow of hypocrisy I had tried to gain a feigned entrance by pretending to be what I am not." On finding that he had no legal right to affirm he became willing to take the oath, its implied obligations being as sacred to his honour and conscience as affirmation. It would have been impossible for him to go through any form unless it were fully binding upon him as to what it expressed or promised.

When no well-founded charges could be directed against him, accusations as reckless as they were unjust were brought. He was denounced as a Socialist—Socialism was less fashionable then than now. He replied, "I happen to think that Socialists are the most unwise and illogical people you can happen to meet." He was represented as holding opinions upon marriage that were abhorrent to him. No accusation of immorality could be sustained against himself; and though he advocated freedom of discus-

sion upon this as upon all subjects, in his opinions upon marriage he was conservative. Lastly, he was accused of parading his religious views before the House. To this as to the other charges he could give a flat denial. "Under great temptation I have refrained from saying a word which could wound the feelings of the most religious." And to this principle he remained always staunch. The House of Commons he regarded as "a political assembly met to decide on the policy of the nation, and not on the religious opinions of the citizens." While he carried on consistently his Freethought propaganda beyond the walls of the House of Commons, within them,—however great his provocation,—he confined himself exclusively to political work. Like all strong souls, he was not without the generosity of strength and knew how to forbear.

Time has so far dealt kindly to Charles Bradlaugh that he lived long enough to see much of the obloquy he had incurred passing away. Slowly but surely members of both sides of the House began to perceive that his conduct had been actuated by some nobler motive than vulgar love of notoriety. And their tardy appreciation and kindness during his illness touched him deeply. But the effects of their former injustice could not so easily pass away. Nature works out her laws too inexorably for that! When fourteen men set upon one man, and erysipelas in the arm results, the constitution will equally suffer whether the assault be just or unjust. If continuous litigation be forced upon one without private means impoverish-

ment of his estate must ensue, however hard he work, or however small his personal expenditure. When Charles Bradlaugh died—honest and honourable though he was—he left his estate burdened with a debt of six thousand pounds, and this, notwithstanding that his only surviving daughter had sacrificed on her father's behalf the life policy he had assigned her. The creditors have generously consented to accept half that amount. Yet certain among them are very poor people, who have invested their all in the debenture bonds upon which it was found necessary to raise capital, and these Mr. Bradlaugh's daughter is most anxious should be fully paid off.

Even as I write I feel that there is a certain irony of fate in the association of Charles Bradlaugh's name with public subscription for clearance of debt. So fiery was his spirit of independence that when, just after his expulsion from his father's house, and he in sore poverty, a subscription from a few sympathizers was offered, he enlisted in the army rather than accept it.

But there was a spirit within him even stronger than his love of independence, viz., his sense of justice; and to the latter we may feel sure he would have sacrificed the former. These poor folks who had trusted him, as indeed they had every reason—for had they not seen him, while earning a thousand a year by his lectures, content to live in three-and-sixpenny lodgings in the East End in order to save enough to pay his debts—should not be allowed to suffer because bigotry and malice have prevented him living long

enough to clear off what from no fault of his own he incurred. His daughter, who seems to have inherited much of her father's strict sense of rectitude, is leaving no stone unturned that may enable her to fulfil what she rightly looks upon as a high obligation. Acting under competent advice she has decided even to part with her father's library—the one luxury he allowed himself. She has issued a complete and priced catalogue of the books, some of which are exceedingly rare, and in order to facilitate immediate sale, marked at low prices. The library consists of over 7000 volumes.

The cost of the catalogue is one shilling, or one shilling and threepence with postage, and may be obtained by application to Mrs. H. Bradlaugh-Bonner, 20, Circus Road, St. John's Wood, London.

The catalogue in itself forms an admirable memento of Mr. Bradlaugh, consisting of the books that were one and all so dear to him. Twice within recent years he thought he should be obliged to sell them to meet legal expenses—the first time it was to pay Government costs during his Parliamentary struggle, the second occasion was after the Peters and Kelly case. Each time the sale was happily averted, but the "anticipation of the possibility," his daughter tells us, "brought extra lines to his face and bitterness to his heart." On the front cover of the catalogue is a *fac-simile* of his autograph, and on the back a reduced reproduction of one of two very fine photographs of the study, taken last May by Messrs. Dixon, of Albany Street.

In addition to the circular recently sent out by Mr. Burt to members of the House of Commons, there are two funds now started—one subscribed to mainly by Freethinkers in but very small sums, rarely amounting to a sovereign, though one gentleman has sent a hundred pounds. The other fund was started by an appeal from Edna Lyall (who herself gave a generous donation), and its contributors are mainly, though by no means necessarily, Christians. It is requested that subscriptions to this fund be sent to George Anderson, Esq., 35, Great George Street, Westminster, S.W.

After all, in the life of Charles Bradlaugh, history is but repeating itself. In every age and every nation the seeker after truth, the man who has the courage of his convictions, who is willing to suffer in his own person for beliefs that posterity will afterwards inherit free from all penalty, has been misunderstood by his own generation. He has been stoned, or crucified, or starved; afterwards, when reparation is too late to be of avail to himself or to those dear to him, he is transformed into a deity or saint or hero, according as the spirit of the age shall dictate. The appreciation, when it is too late to be of good, grows to be as unlimited as the execration, when, alas! it could do much ill, was unbounded. Let us learn by the lesson of history and not defer our reparation till it is too late to be of good. It is not necessary to share all Charles Bradlaugh's opinions in order to be convinced of the injustice with which he was treated. The number of clergymen who attended his funeral (thus showing

themselves worthy sons of that Protestantism for which their fathers fought and bled—for what is Protestantism but the assertion of the right of private judgment?) attest this. Creeds are many, varying with race and nation, limited to place and time, differing slightly even with each generation. But the absolutely honest man, the man whose sense of integrity is stronger than his fear of persecution or desire for worldly success, is limited to no age or country, but is recognized as the noblest product of humanity; whose example, if it is not given to us all to imitate, such among us as have the love of truth within ourselves will always admire.

As sings the poet whose loss we have had so recently to deplore:—

“Many loved Truth, and lavished life's best oil
Amid the dusk of books to find her,
Content at last, for guerdon of their toil,
With the cast mantle she hath left behind her.
Many in sad faith sought for her,
Many with crossed hands sighed for her,
But these our brothers fought for her,
At life's dear peril wrought for her,
So loved her that they died for her,
Tasting the raptured fleetness
Of her divine completeness:
Their higher instinct knew
Those love her best who to themselves are true,
And what they dare to dream of dare to do.
They followed her and found her
Where all may hope to find,—
Not in the ashes of the burnt-out mind,
But beautiful with danger's sweetness round her,

Where Faith made whole with deed
Breathes its awakening breath
Into the lifeless creed.
They saw her plumed and mailed
With sweet, stern face unveiled,
And all-repaying eyes look proud on them in death.*

If we cannot undo the past let us at least make what reparation we can. Let us free Mr. Bradlaugh's estate from the burden of debt so unjustly brought upon it. Let us, above all, see that his daughter shall not suffer through her own and her father's honesty.

* From J. R. LOWELL's *Ode* at Harvard Commemoration.

*On the Duty of Honesty in our
Convictions.*

SIDE by side with the strides in material prosperity that the last fifty years have seen—remarkable amid the changes in intellectual conception which have undergone a revolution hardly paralleled in the sixteenth century—are two moral changes, conferring upon mankind greater immunity from misery than that wrought either by increase in material comfort or by fuller accuracy in intellectual conception. I mean, first, our greater humanity towards our fellows; secondly, our greater toleration towards those who differ from us in religious beliefs.

The latter change is, perhaps, a natural product of the former; but it is yet in a very early stage of development; differing from its parent as most young things differ from those to whom they owe their existence; requiring the care all delicate young growths require if we would have them attain healthy maturity. The doctrine of humanity towards our fellows teaches us that we should do unto others as we would have them do unto us—a doctrine inculcated alike by Christ, Buddha, and Confucius, but which has seldom been called into practice more

consistently than in this generation. The doctrine of religious toleration teaches that we should tolerate the religious opinions of others as we would have our own tolerated by them. The special danger or liability to abuse in this young growth seems to me to be with that school of thought called Agnostic—that, while freely tolerating the religious opinions of others, they do not sufficiently insist upon reciprocal toleration towards their own. In a word, with few notable exceptions—martyrs and pioneers in a cause confessedly making Truth the object of worship—they have not honesty and courage in their convictions. They who profess to reverence Truth as their highest aim are less loyal to their mistress than they who worship mere authority. It is the purport of the present short paper to examine into the causes at work in this anomaly, and to consider how far this tenderness towards the religious feelings of others may be carried consistently with honesty towards ourselves and loyalty to what we hold to be the higher truth.

That Agnosticism has made a vast stride during the last few years will be affirmed, I think, by every self-acknowledged Agnostic on terms of sufficient intimacy with his friends to be acquainted with their true opinions. Yet it will be also affirmed by such of the orthodox, as are liberal enough to cultivate an acquaintance with persons of all forms of belief, that it takes a longer time to discover the opinions of the average Agnostic than those of the Roman Catholic, Dissenter, or Jew. These latter may be as courteous and inoffensive as the Agnostic—

may as little intrude their opinions upon their host—but the Jew goes openly to his synagogue, the Roman Catholic to his church, the Dissenter to his chapel. The average Agnostic, on the other hand, attends the State Church of his country, not unfrequently subscribes to the charities peculiarly associated with the Church, will sometimes even have his children baptized by her rites, thus enrolling them as members of a religion all belief in which he has long since discarded for himself. While—strangest anomaly of all—many ministers of the Church of England, privately holding Agnostic views, continue to receive payment as public professors and teachers of a faith that they have ceased to hold. And this apparently without conscious dishonesty! Of all strange paradoxes in this paradoxical world this conduct on the part of the Agnostic, whose *raison d'être* is search for and witness to truth, is the strangest. For what Jew, or Catholic, or Dissenter, would have his children educated and enrolled as members of a religion not believed in by themselves? And what clergyman holding originally Church of England views, but now believing Roman Catholicism or some other form of Christianity to be the one true Church, would consent to be paid by the State for preaching and extending his former opinions?

Perhaps it will be answered, "The Catholic and the Jew are assured of their convictions; we are not sure of ours. They, as regards other religions, are in a state of disbelief; we are merely in one of unbelief." But the reply is not true. It is only

upon the vast questions lying beyond phenomena that Agnostics profess no definite belief because they have not sufficient knowledge to justify them in forming one. In the primary doctrines of orthodox Christianity they are no mere "unbelievers," they are "disbelievers." They do not believe, for instance, that the world was made in six days, however the religious geologist may quibble about "periods." They absolutely deny that the sin of Adam brought death into the world, knowing that ages before the existence of man animals lived and died; and denying this, they are forced to deny the profoundly immoral doctrine that has this for its sole basis, namely, that God could not, or would not, forgive His guilty children without causing His innocent Child to be murdered. But if they entirely deny all this, as assuredly they do, in what sense can they be called mere *unbelievers* in Christianity? Is it not an unworthy quibble not to acknowledge themselves to be absolute *disbelievers*?

Is there, then, no truer interpretation of this moral timidity? I will not here inquire into what I fear could not rightly be set aside in a longer paper, namely, the immense amount of conscious dishonesty that has crept into Agnosticism, so that men will disguise their opinions from fear of social ostracism, forgetting that in the words of Lowell—

"Then to side with Truth is noble,
When we share her wretched crust,
Ere her cause bring fame and profit,
And 'tis prosperous to be just."

Let me here rather consider those nobler causes at work which, beneficial as they may prove under careful guidance, yet, if left uncontrolled, threaten to destroy that delicate sense of truth and honour which has been the prime mover of all moral progress. We fetter not only our own consciences, but the consciences of our children's children, by silent acquiescence in assertions that we know to be as untrue as they are immoral.

Foremost among these nobler causes is the feeling—natural to all who have long inherited religious experiences, and have been brought up religiously themselves—that if we desire our children to grow up to be the earnest men and women we would have them to be, instead of mere frivolous seekers after pleasure, we must instil into them some religious principles. Yet a little consideration should surely teach us that the last way to inculcate morality into our children is by preaching as truth that which we know to be fable; while to confuse inextricably in a child's mind the great undoubted truths of morality with fabulous assertions of cosmogony seems to me, in our present state of knowledge, conduct than which hardly any other can be more reprehensible. The great doctrines of morality deal with our duties towards our fellows, and can be for the most part summed up in the injunction common to all higher religions, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."* The great questions of religion all

* Or perhaps the injunction, to be quite capable of being literally and accurately carried out, should run : Do unto others as you would

deal with that which lies outside and beyond phenomena. No thoughtful person can escape these questions; and so long as we do not insist upon our own interpretation as infallible, their influence is, I believe, beneficial; elevating us above the jealousies and more paltry feelings of humanity; filling us also with a sense of our own limitation and ignorance.

"But," it may be retorted, "little children are incapable of these higher feelings. Are we, therefore, to keep them in ignorance of all religion?" For myself I think it better to confine our teaching entirely to the inculcation of moral duties. Love and obedience

have others do unto all men, and as you would have all men do unto others.

Save where our sympathies are specially enlisted in the exceptional cases of the offender being a beloved friend or relative, even the most humane among us would like a thief or murderer to be discovered and punished; not so much from any feeling of revenge as from the consciousness that discovery acts as a deterrent in some measure from any future repetition of the crimes. We all feel that life and property would tend to become insecure if the offender were either not discovered, or, if discovered, were too leniently treated. Whereas there is no offender, save when under the influence of extreme, unusual remorse, who would not wish to escape discovery and punishment, if possible for himself. If he did unto others as he would have others do unto him, it is quite certain that acquittals would be very numerous, if not wholly universal. As Professor Huxley somewhat shrewdly puts it in *Evolution and Ethics*: "What would become of the garden if the gardener treated all the weeds and slugs and birds as he would like to be treated if he were in their place?"

It seems to me that the Kantian categorical imperative, "So act that your conduct may become a rule for all men," expresses more fully the meaning that is probably equally held and intended by the preachers of the injunction, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

to parents and teachers; tenderness and protection to younger brothers and sisters; above all, a habit of strictest integrity and truthfulness:—these seem to me to be all-sufficient for the concrete, limited mind of a little child. But as the period of childhood passes away and is replaced by youth, then I think it well to place into the hands of the thoughtful boy or girl some simple, easily comprehended summary of the higher religious and philosophical systems which have so powerfully influenced the world, pointing out what they have in common and where they differ, laying stress upon all that is noble and good in each, exposing what there is of undoubted error. Nor must we be disappointed if our children embrace some religion or philosophy not held by ourselves. Where there are many minds there will be many opinions. Our children will probably differ from us as we from our parents. But religion was made for man, not man for religion; and the religion or philosophy our children will select for themselves will probably be far better adapted to their peculiar needs than any we should have selected for them; while by having refrained from inculcating any system as infallible before they were capable of intelligent rejection or acceptance, their period of construction can be passed through without any agonizing period of destruction.

“But the rites and ceremonies that are the appendages of all religions, are these to be kept from the impressionable mind of childhood?” may be asked. While not denying that in some very few cases rites

and ceremonies are aids to the higher life, historical investigation and personal knowledge convince me that in the vast majority of cases they are hindrances. Ceremonies have been perverted into substitutes for morality instead of aids to it. The work of one great teacher after another has been to expose the dangers of formalism, to seek to destroy the letter of the law and rekindle the spirit, to substitute for meat-offering the sacrifice of a contrite heart and healthy, genuine reformation of life. If we may judge of the future by the past, I think we may affirm that the longer the ingenuous, untainted mind of a little child is kept free from the paralyzing influences of ceremonialism the better. Even under the happiest circumstances, what few advantages it may have as an aid to the higher life can in no way atone for the iniquity we commit when we consciously allow our children to be taught as truths that which we ourselves have long since recognized to be fable.

I come now to another factor in this moral timidity of Agnostics—a factor noble in its origin and beneficial even in its workings, if it is only kept under due control. I mean the tenderness and sympathy shown by Agnostics towards such of their friends and relatives as still hold the beliefs from which they themselves have long since parted. On this wise Agnosticism, in its present stage of youth, compares favourably with the youthful stage of other sects. In the majority of religious or non-religious bodies the virulence of the new convert to members of the former faith has passed into a proverb. No such accusation, happily, can be

brought against Agnostics. The question with them rather should be, How far can this tenderness be carried consistently with loyalty to their new faith? This is a question that seems to me to be of greater difficulty than the one that we have been just considering.

In venturing to discuss it, I would be understood to do so with extreme diffidence, since to a large extent—depending as it does upon individual circumstances—it is a question better solved by each person for himself.

There are probably few of us who are not upon terms of intimacy with aged persons, living for the most part in the retirement of the country, entirely ignorant of the great questions so powerfully influencing the middle and rising generations, to whom confession of any change in faith would be too profoundly startling to do any manner of good, but would only cause intense pain. In all cases it is better to act according to the spirit rather than the letter; and to me personally it seems—though here, as I have said, I speak with diffidence, seeking guidance rather than offering it—tenderness towards the opinions of those too old to change is the higher duty; so long, of course, as we are assured that the motive guiding us is tenderness and not self-interest. In such cases it appears to me that we may rightly follow Tennyson's injunction:—

“Leave thou thy sister when she prays
Her early heaven, her happy views;
Nor thou with shadow'd hint confuse
A life that leads melodious days.”

Agnostics are no bigots in their rejection of Christianity, knowing that among somewhat that is revolting to their moral sense is also much from which they may learn. It would be impossible for them, when staying with these aged persons, to absent themselves from public worship or family prayers without entering into some explanation which would be as incomprehensible to them as it would be painful. Yet it seems to me also that it is only with the old—those who were in their prime when Tennyson wrote—that tenderness can be carried thus far. Our environment is not the same as it was forty years ago. When *In Memoriam* was written Biblical criticism was in its infancy; what there was of science was for the most part kept for the few; above all, the great doctrine of evolution—which to theology is as a new witness coming into court proving an *alibi*—was hardly so much as mooted. However they seek to disguise it from themselves, it is no longer possible for men and women of middle life to be ignorant of the onslaughts that are shaking Christianity to its very foundation; and though personally I do not advocate proselytism, save that unconscious proselytism that comes from example—history having shown how baneful in their effects have been all proselytising religions—yet I hold that it is imperative for each to be true to his own belief. Of all sects Agnostics have least reason to be ashamed of the faith that is in them, since they, more than others, have endeavoured to “prove all things”; have not parted from their former faith till they found that every advance in scientific knowledge, every effort

in Biblical criticism, was a support to the new and a confusion to the old. Why then should they be less courageous in standing fast to that which they hold to be true? I think that it is Archbishop Whately who tells us that "It is not enough that we believe what we maintain; we must maintain it because we believe it." He that is unfaithful in great things will have greater difficulty in being faithful in small. We imperil our sense of honesty—that delicate growth so easily checked—when we play fast and loose with our consciences in this way. Our children will not be able to regard our false teaching with the toleration that we have for that of our parents, since these taught us as they themselves believed, as in that period of scientific ignorance they could hardly help believe. There is no such excuse for us. If, whether from fear of social ostracism or from moral timidity, we set our children an example of double-dealing or equivocation in that which is highest, we have only ourselves to blame if their sense of honesty becomes clouded, and they deal with their fellows in the minor details of life in a way neither upright nor just. Toleration is a great blessing, but the danger of virtues abused has passed into a proverb. Let us be on our guard, then, lest our toleration in others of opinions honestly held be not gradually distorted into sanction of compromise between truth and falsehood as held by ourselves.

The Centenary of Dean Ramsay,

AUTHOR OF

"REMINISCENCES OF SCOTTISH LIFE AND CHARACTER."

THE fashion of celebrating centenaries, even of authors but moderately distinguished, that has lately grown up among us, is specially useful, when, as in the case of Dean Ramsay (born early in the year 1793), the chief talent consisted in depicting the manners of his own and immediately preceding generations.

There are certain books which, should they outlive the generation for whom they were written, will do so, not by virtue of the purpose that the author had in writing, such as the temporary amusement of his readers or the inculcation of some great moral lesson; but because of the faithful representation they give of a condition of things existing at the time when the author wrote, but which subsequently underwent a complete alteration, or altogether passed away. Among these, for instance, is certainly Dickens' *Pickwick*. It is not infrequent in these days to hear some detractor of the great novelist ask, "*Will Dickens live?*" Whether his novels will live as mere novels or no, it is safe to prophesy that to the antiquarian of the

future *Pickwick* will always be of interest, because of the faithful representation there given of the old stage-coach days, and of the Fleet Prison, both of which have passed away. Again, *Little Dorrit* should live, because of the sketch of the Marshalsea Prison. Thackeray truly says, "A man, who a hundred years hence should sit down to write the history of our time, would do wrong to put that great contemporary history of *Pickwick* aside as a frivolous work. It contains true character under false names; and like *Roderick Random*, an inferior work, and *Tom Jones*, one that is immeasurably superior, gives us a better idea of the state and ways of the people than one could gather from any more pompous or authentic histories." In other words, though it is quite conceivable that the humorous anecdotes, the hilarious jokes that have caused many an innocent laugh to readers of Dickens' own generation, may cease to be appreciated by a future generation; yet, as graphic representations of days long since passed away, of a condition of things no longer existing, the value of *Pickwick* and *Little Dorrit* should increase rather than decrease.

It is to this same class of books that the subject before us belongs. Whether Dean Ramsay's *Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character* will live to amuse readers of future generations as they have amused his own, is difficult to predict. When published they ran quickly through twenty-two editions; yet the sense of humour is so subtle and fleeting, differs so in different individuals, that it is quite

possible that anecdotes that are appreciated by one generation will seem exaggerated or tiresome to another. Yet, however this may be, by the antiquarian or sociologist of the future these *Reminiscences* should not remain unconsulted.

The anecdotes gathered by the author, apparently quite at haphazard, give a keener insight into certain of the prejudices and customs of Scotland at the beginning of this century than many works written with a graver purpose. No doubt each century, nay, each generation, differs somewhat from its predecessors; but owing to the diffusion of cheap literature, owing perhaps in a still greater degree to the international communication through the agency of railways, greater changes have taken place in this century than in any preceding, and thus certain eccentricities and prejudices have passed away, never to rise again. Human nature at bottom may be the same. There may still be more than enough of religious pride, of national self-righteousness and bigotry, but the condition of society has for ever passed away that could make a repetition (as example) of the following anecdote related by Dean Ramsay possible: "During the long French war two old ladies in Stranraer were going to the kirk. The one said to the other, 'Was it no a wonderfu' thing that the Breetish were aye victorious ower the French in battle?' 'Not a bit,' said the other old lady, 'dinna ye ken the Breetish aye say their prayers before ga'in into battle?' The other replied, 'But canna the French say their prayers as weel?' The reply was most characteristic, 'Hoot! jabbering bodies, wha could *understan*' them?'"

In this brief sketch I propose to limit myself to two conditions or phases of society delineated by Dean Ramsay in these *Reminiscences* that have almost passed away. First, the drunken state of society existing in Scotland (and to a certain extent in England also) at that time. Secondly, the behaviour of servants towards their masters and mistresses.

The Blue Ribbon Crusade has brought before us so vividly the evils and extent of drunkenness in the present, that we are apt to overlook the fact that, notwithstanding its still too great prevalence, the decrease during the last eighty or hundred years is something simply enormous. No one now pretends to regard drunkenness other than a vice. Years ago it was thought to be a natural circumstance in every man's life. What novelist writing now would depict a man so gentle, benevolent, and eminently *respectable* as Mr. Pickwick, as falling into so great a state of intoxication that he was overcome by lethargy in another person's grounds; that while in this state he went fast asleep in a wheelbarrow, not even aroused from it when he was wheeled out of the grounds by a servant belonging to their proprietor? Yet Dickens relates it in all innocence and unconcern, evidently thinking it would be accepted as a humorous incident, and nothing more; requiring no moral to be pointed, or disapproving comment to be added. A hundred years ago drunkenness was thought not only inoffensive, but absolutely manly and laudable. "A fine religious drunken body" were a combination of adjectives that carried with them no sense of incongruity. Judges and clergy were no

exception to the invariable rule. The Scotch are generally credited with extreme rigour in keeping the *Sabbath*; yet Dean Ramsay tells us that in the early part of the century "drinking parties were protracted beyond the whole Sunday, having begun by a dinner on Saturday." Now and then, it is true, if a clergyman or minister drank to any extreme excess, the bishop felt himself bound to interfere. Even this was a certain step in the right way; but he met with no sympathy from the offender's congregation. "One of our Gaelic clergy," relates Dean Ramsay, "had so far forgotten himself as to appear in the church somewhat the worse of liquor. This having happened so often as to come to the ears of the bishop, he suspended him from the performance of divine service. Against this decision the people were a little disposed to rebel, because, according to their Highland notions, a gentleman was "no the waur for being able to take a gude glass of whiskey." "These were the notions," adds Dean Ramsay, "of a people in whose eyes the power of swallowing whiskey conferred distinction, and with whom inability to take the fitting quantity was a mark of a mean and futile character." Drunkenness was considered so natural and excusable, reprehension of drunkenness so fanatical and intolerant, that it was difficult to get a witness to testify to any symptoms of intoxication he had seen, if there were possibility of escape by equivocation. A beadle, or some church official, was examined as to the fact of drunkenness being charged against a minister. He was asked, "Did you ever see the minister the worse of drink?"

"I canna say I've seen him the waur o' drink, but nae doubt I've seen him the *better* o't," was the reply. Even the funeral rites of the Highland chieftains were not supposed to have been properly performed without an immoderate and often fatal amount of whiskey. Dean Ramsay relates that at the last funeral in the Highlands, conducted according to the traditions of olden times, several of the guests fell victims to the usage, and actually died of the excesses. At a dinner party no host thought that he had performed the duties of hospitality efficiently unless he persuaded his guests to drink themselves into a state of intoxication. Wine glasses frequently had their bottoms knocked off, so that when filled they must be emptied and drained. Indeed guests were not only pressed, they were compelled to drink till they fell under the table; a servant being in readiness to attend to them in this condition. Dean Ramsay relates an anecdote as coming from Mackenzie, the author of the *Man of Feeling*: "He had been involved in a regular drinking party. He was keeping as free from the usual excesses as he was able, and as he marked companions around him falling victims to the power of drink, he himself dropped off under the table among the slain, as a measure of precaution; and lying there, his attention was called to a small pair of hands working at his throat. On asking what it was, a voice replied, "Sir, I'm the lad that's to lowse the neckclothes." Even women, though they do not seem to have indulged to any great extent in drunkenness themselves, visited the failing in their male relatives and acquaintances with no manner of

disapproval. On the contrary, they would have thought themselves wanting in true hospitality had they not provided them with every inducement to drink themselves into a state of intoxication. Indeed the entire indifference with which ladies looked upon what we now rightfully consider among the most loathsome of vices may be aptly seen by the following somewhat ghastly story told by Dean Ramsay: "About seventy years ago an old maiden lady died in Strathpey. Just previous to her death she sent for her grand-nephew, and said to him, 'Willy, I'm deein', and as ye'll hae the charge o' a' I have, mind now that as much whiskey is to be used at my funeral as there was at my baptism.' Willy neglected to ask the old lady what the quantity of the whiskey used at the baptism was; but when the day of the funeral arrived, believed her orders would be best fulfilled by allowing each guest to drink as much as he pleased. The churchyard where the body was to be deposited was about ten miles distant from where the death occurred. It was a short day in November, and when the funeral party came to the churchyard the shades of night had considerably closed in. The grave-digger, whose patience had been exhausted in waiting, was not in the least willing to accept of the chief mourner's apology for delay. After looking about him he put the anxious question, 'But whaur's Miss Ketty?' The reply was, 'In her coffin, to be sure, and get it into the earth as fast as you can.' There, however, was no coffin; the procession had sojourned at a country inn by the way—had rested the body on a dyke, started without it, and had to

postpone the interment until next day." However pessimists may croak of the little improvement in temperance during the past fifty or sixty years, they must admit that hardly the lowest roughs would in these days behave to their dead in the manner described above of a family in good social position less than a hundred years ago.

The next alteration in certain of our habits and customs, as shown by Dean Ramsay's Recollections, to which I wish to draw attention, is that existing in the relationship between servants and their masters and mistresses. Doubtless the change here is not that unmixed good as is the decrease in intemperance we have just been considering. But for good or ill the change exists, and probably may be traced to the social conditions now surrounding us. Men make fortunes quickly, and lose them quickly; estates frequently change hands. Even when they are still held by the original proprietors, the attractions of London and the Continent are apt to lead to a good deal of non-residence on the part of the heads of the household. A housekeeper then acts as mistress in place of the wife. Attachment is thus necessarily less deep between the servant and her employer. It is rare now to hear of generations of one family of servants living in the service of generations of one family of employers.

The penny post and cheap newspapers and railways keep workpeople *au courant* with the stage of wages in the country, and a servant discovers if she is being underpaid or no. But in the old days, before the

introduction of railways, sentiment played a large part in the relationship between servants and their employers. The attachment of servants was often so great that they would cling to the family when in distress, preferring to serve them without wage than separate from them; and employers on their part seldom allowed a servant to go adrift when incapacitated by sickness or old age. Yet there is another side of the picture. Here, as elsewhere, distance lends enchantment to the view. A closer approach shows the poetry and picturesqueness of an undoubtedly disinterested relationship marred by the quasi-contempt so often the result of too great familiarity. The following anecdote related by Dean Ramsay may be cited in proof: "An old Mr. Erskine, of Dun, had one of these old retainers, under whose language and unreasonable assumption he had long groaned. He had almost determined to stand it no longer; when walking out with his man, on crossing the field, the master exclaimed, 'There's a hare.' Andrew looked at the place and coolly replied, 'What a big lee! it's a cauff.' The master, quite angry now, plainly told the old domestic that they *must* part. But the tried servant of forty years, not dreaming of the possibility of *his* dismissal, innocently asked, 'Ay, sir, whare ye gaun'? I'm sure ye're aye best at home.'"

How next to impossible it was for a *young* master to get himself obeyed is well shown by the following reply of an old servant upon being rebuked: "Ye needna find faut wi' me, Maister Jeems, I hae been

longer about the place than yersel'." Sometimes a disinterested desire for economy was exhibited by a faithful servant in a manner sufficiently annoying to the patience of any mistress. In modern days it is the custom to have everything carved off the table, and a hostess thinks that she has performed her duty to her guests sufficiently when she has provided them with an ample choice of the different delicacies of the season, rightfully considering that whether they will eat of them or no must depend upon the state of their appetites, of which they must certainly be better judges than she could possibly be. Not so in former days. Every dish was placed on the table, and few hostesses would have thought that they had done their duty if they had not pressed food upon their guests so strenuously as to make refusal almost impossible. In the anecdote I am about to relate, a lady, following this fashion, had pressed all the more delicate and attractive dishes upon her guests, when the old domestic, to the horror of the mistress and amusement of the guests, said, in a perfectly audible whisper, "Press the jeelies, they winna keep."

Servants in the old days squabbled amongst each other very much as they do now, though oftentimes their retorts were quainter than in these more conventional days. Dean Ramsay tells one amusing anecdote as a sample: "A mistress observing something peculiar in her maid's manner addressed her, 'Dear me, Tibbie, what are you so snappish about that you go knocking the things as you dust them?' 'Ou, mum, it's Jock.' 'Well, what has Jock been

doing?' 'Ou (with an indescribable, but easily imaginable, toss of the head), he was angry at me, an' miss-ca'd me, an' I said I was juist as the Lord had made me, an'——' 'Well, Tibbie?' 'An' he said the Lord could hae had little to do when He made me.'" "The idea of Tibbie," adds Dean Ramsay, "being the work of an idle moment was one, the deliciousness of which was not likely to be relished by Tibbie."

The above anecdotes being somewhat to the disparagement of the servants of former days, it is but fair to cite in conclusion one portraying a gentle pathos and devotion seldom to be equalled by the servants of our own days. The subject of it was an old woman who had lived in the service of one family from her childhood till she died in it, at seventy-five years of age.

"Her feeling to her old master, who was about two years younger than herself," says Dean Ramsay, "was a curious compound of the deference of a servant and the affection and familiarity of a sister. She had known him as a boy, lad, man, and old man, and she seemed to have a sort of notion that without her he must be a very helpless being indeed. 'I aye keepit the house for him, whether he was home or awa',' was a frequent utterance of hers, and she never seemed to think the intrusion even of his own nieces at all legitimate. When on her death-bed he hobbled to her room with difficulty, having just got over a severe attack of gout, to bid her farewell. . . . 'Laird,' said she (for so she always called him, though his

lairdship was of the smallest), 'Will ye tell them to bury me whaur I'll lie across your feet?'"

Dean Ramsay died in December, 1872. Two years after his death the 22nd edition of his *Reminiscences*, with a memoir, was published. I am not aware of any later edition, but trust that this year may see a revival of interest in a work that by the antiquarian or sociologist should not be allowed to pass from remembrance.

*On the Graver Writings of James
Russell Lowell.*

THERE is an epigram—attributed, I believe, to Horace Walpole—that says, “Life is a tragedy to those who feel, and a comedy to those who think.” The epigram, like so many of its kind, contains, though not an entire truth, yet a close approximation to truth. Men can, to a large extent, be divided into two classes: those who occupy themselves principally with the consideration of the sufferings of mankind, and those who, though not entirely devoid of sympathy, yet are more impressed with its follies. So far back as the early Greek School of Philosophy, Democritus was called the “laughing philosopher,” Heraclitus the “weeping philosopher. So lately as the last century, Schopenhauer may be cited as an illustration of one in whom the sense of the tragedy of life predominated; Voltaire in whom there was a greater consciousness of its comedy.

Occasionally, however, men of composite natures are born—men in whom the perception of the tragic and comic elements of life seem blended in almost equal proportion. Such was the American poet so lately taken from us, James Russell Lowell; such also was

the English poet, Thomas Hood. Yet, since the gift of humour is rarer than that of sympathy with suffering; and since, moreover, men like to be amused, it often comes about that with writers equally great in humour and pathos, their graver works are somewhat overshadowed by their humorous in the minds of their readers.

The name of Lowell, for instance, is so associated with *The Biglow Papers*, that the graver poems to which it is the purport of the present article to draw attention are much less read than they should be. Again, it was Hood's ambition to be numbered among the serious poets; yet, before the publication of the *Song of the Shirt* and the *Bridge of Sighs*, he was so identified with comedy that the former could find a place in no graver pages than those of *Punch*! William Michael Rossetti thinks that there is a certain similarity between the serious poems of Lowell and Hood. No doubt there is a resemblance between the minds of the two poets, inasmuch as they were each endowed with the two gifts of pathos and humour; yet the distinction between them seems to me to be this: Lowell keeps his humorous moments entirely apart from his serious. His humorous poems have now and then, it is true, a graver purpose at their basis, as is the case with the first part of *The Biglow Papers*, and he does not disdain the aid of satire. But his serious poems are wholly serious. They are unrelieved by the faintest glimpse of humour, and he writes almost as didactically as the prophet Jeremiah or Thomas Carlyle. He comes forward as a moralist

pure and simple, rebuking, rousing to a sense of right. In Hood the threads of humour and pathos are so deftly interwoven that, with few exceptions—notably in the two well-known poems of the *Bridge of Sighs* and the *Song of the Shirt*—both of which are wholly serious—it is difficult to say whether he intends any poem to be considered wholly comic or wholly pathetic, though for purpose of convenience his publishers have brought out one volume as “Serious” and the other as “Comic.” This curious intermixture of pathos and humour seems not to be confined to his writings, but to have tinged his whole life. It is recorded of him that, when dying of consumption and very emaciated, a large mustard poultice being prepared for him, he said to his wife, “It seems a great deal of mustard for so very little meat.” It was probably said with a view to bringing a smile to her face, yet she must have had some difficulty also, I think, in repressing her tears.

Perhaps the best means of showing the difference between the two poets is by quoting a few lines from each when they are writing upon the same subject:—

By those who have the faculty both of feeling and thinking, the gift of life, save under exceptional circumstances, is perceived to be but a doubtful blessing, and it is felt, or should be felt, that there is consequently no act to be entered upon with so grave a sense of responsibility as that of marriage, since it brings with it the probability of parenthood. The stanza which I will take from Lowell upon the New Born Babe is from a poem called *Extreme Unction*,

and its strain is so solemn as to be tragic. It runs thus:—

“Men think it is an awful sight
To see a soul just set adrift
On that drear voyage from whose night
The ominous shadows never lift;
But 't is more awful to behold
A helpless infant newly born,
Whose little hands unconscious hold
The keys of darkness and of morn.”

Hood, too, writes upon this subject; but in a strain of less absolute solemnity. He adopts a moralising tone that is half humorous, half pathetic, and the stanzas I quote are from a poem that, superficially considered, is one of his most comic, *i.e.*, *Miss Kilmansegg*:—

“Into this world we come like ships,
Launched from the docks and stocks and slips,
For fortune fair or fatal;
And one little craft is cast away,
In its very first trip in Babbicombe Bay,
While another rides safe at Port Natal.

“What different lots our stars accord,
This babe to be hailed and wooed as a lord,
And that to be shunned as a leper!
One to the world's wine, honey, and corn,
Another like Colchester's native, born
To its vinegar only and pepper.”

I do not think that any of Lowell's serious poems will quite take the place in popular favour that has been accorded to Hood's *Bridge of Sighs* or his *Song of the Shirt*. But where Lowell has a distinct advantage over Hood is in his power of condensing his finer thoughts into a few terse vigorous lines,

almost epigrammatic in their brevity, and that, therefore, can easily be committed to memory. As his ideal of life is always noble and lofty, this should make him a distinct moral force, inspiring his readers with love of right and hatred of wrong. These fine gems of thought are almost carelessly scattered about, appearing quite as often in his slighter as in his nobler poems. Take the following lines, for instance, which appear in a poem called the *Autograph*, containing little else in it of merit, while the lines themselves can hardly fail to impress the young author with a sense of the grave responsibility of his calling, and wean him from all low ambition and mere vulgar worship of success.

“Greatly begin ! though thou have time
But for a line—be that sublime :
Not failure, but low aim is crime.”

Or this, from his fourth Sonnet, upon the force of Good Example :—

“Be noble ! And the nobleness that lies
In other men, sleeping, but never dead,
Will rise in majesty to meet thine own ;
Then will pure light around thy path be shed,
And thou wilt never more be sad and lone.”

The necessity of *beginning well* was felt by Lowell to be a supreme necessity if we would do anything great and enduring, and he recurs to it more than once :—

“Oh, small beginnings ! Ye are great and strong,
Based on a faithful heart and weariless brain.
Ye build the future fair, ye conquer wrong,
Ye earn the crown and wear it not in vain !”

Lowell was an ardent abolitionist, and a large number of his poems are devoted to the subject of slavery. While always siding with the oppressed, and a warm advocate of liberty, freedom meant with him more than mere freedom of body. It comprised—and in a far stronger degree—freedom of soul and full courage of conviction.

“They are slaves who fear to speak
 For the fallen and the weak ;
 They are slaves who will not choose,
 Hatred, scoffing, and abuse,
 Rather than in silence shrink
 From the truth they needs must think ;
 They are slaves who dare not be
 In the right with two and three.”

There was too much of the democrat in Lowell for him to be able to share Hood's belief in the superior happiness of the child of fortune. The slave of fashion and conventionality was to him a being nearly as pitiful, and far more contemptible, than the unemancipated negro ; yet he perceives that it is no easy matter for the child of fortune to shake himself free from its trammels. In a fine poem called *The Heritage*—too long to quote at length—he has set forth his views upon the subject. It will suffice to give the two following verses as illustration :—

“The rich man's son inherits lands,
 And piles of brick and stone and gold,
 And he inherits soft white hands
 And tender flesh that fears the cold,
 Nor dares to wear a garment old :
 A heritage it seems to me
 One scarce would wish to hold in fee.

.

“What doth the poor man’s son inherit?
Stout muscles and a sinewy heart,
A hardy frame, a hardier spirit,
King of two hands, he doth his part
In every useful toil and art :
A heritage it seems to me
A king might wish to hold in fee.”

Yet sympathetic as Lowell was with the labouring classes, he could hardly be called a democrat in the popular sense of the word, inasmuch as he did not believe in the worth of majorities—a disbelief that will surely be shared by every thoughtful student of history. He knew that the great man could come from the lower classes as from the higher; but he also knew that the really great man is seldom recognized by his contemporaries. All great truths have had to make their way in spite of majorities, rather than because of them. In a very fine poem called *The Present Crisis*, he says:—

“Count me o’er earth’s chosen heroes—they were men who
stood alone,
While the men they agonised for hurled the contumelious
stone.”

For popular applause he had an absolute distrust.
A poem to Lamartine opens thus:—

“I did not praise thee when the crowd,
Witched with the moment’s inspiration,
Vexed thy still ether with hosannas loud,
And stamped their dusty adoration :
I but looked upward with the rest
And, when they shouted Greatest, whispered Best.”

Yet since the world's true heroes have been so seldom recognized by their own generation; since they have literally died in order that future generations might be free—been either actually murdered or allowed to starve in oblivion, in order that posterity might profit by their discoveries, or receive the still greater boon of liberty of thought—Lowell bids us remember with gratitude how greatly we are indebted to them.

I will conclude this paper with two stanzas from a poem called *Masaccio*, in which he deals with this subject:—

“Thoughts that great hearts once broke for, we
Breathe cheaply in the common air,
The dust we trample heedlessly
Throbbled once in saints and heroes rare
Who perished, opening for their race
New pathways to the commonplace.

“Henceforth, when rings the health to those
Who live in story and in song,
A nameless dead, who now repose
Safe in Oblivion's chambers strong,
One cup of recognition true
Shall silently be drained to you!”

NOTE.

As possibly among my readers there may be some who are not very familiar with the life of Lowell, it may be useful to state that he was born at Cambridge, Massachusetts, in 1819. In 1838 he graduated at Harvard College without any special rank. In 1840 he was admitted to the Bar at Boston; but the bent of his mind

impelled him to the pursuit of literature, especially to poetry. In 1855 he succeeded Longfellow as Professor of Modern Languages and Literature at Harvard College. Subsequently his devotion to literature was somewhat interrupted by his service to diplomacy. In 1877 he was made Minister to the Court of Madrid, and was transferred in 1883 to England, the post of Minister to Great Britain being the highest gift an American Minister can bestow. In 1891 he died.

On the Reasonableness of Personal Direction in Personal Matters.

WHEN Naaman the Leper, seeking some cure for his leprosy, received the command to "wash in Jordan seven times," it is recorded that he went away in a rage. And his servants came near and spake to him and said, "My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? How much rather then, when he saith to thee, 'Wash and be clean?'" An anecdote that, whether historically true or no, contains a moral as much needing to be pointed now as in the days of Naaman.

Paradoxical as it seems, the method that is circuitous, indirect, and of which it is difficult to foresee the result has generally met with applause from men; while that which is simple and direct, obvious in working, easy in attainment, has attracted little but contempt. Especially is this the case with the popular philanthropy and Municipal and State Socialism, so much in vogue just now.

Let a Parliamentary candidate promise to interfere in a matter so entirely personal as the number of hours a man may work—an interference one would have imagined must be resented as an unpardonable im-

pertinence—he is tolerably sure to be rewarded with popular applause and popular votes. Let him, after having dictated thus much, next proceed to an interference only second in impertinence with working so long as he likes—namely, interference with his conduct towards his own children. Let him promise to decide what subjects they shall be taught, and how many hours they shall be made to learn, and the additional presumption will be rewarded with additional appreciation. The candidate will be on the fair road to becoming a popular hero.

But now, instead of such a candidate, let us suppose another opposing him ; one with conscience higher than ambition, and intelligence sufficient to enable him to argue from particular causes to general. Let us suppose that this candidate, having observed that every sane adult, taken individually, knows his own wants better than anyone else can know them for him ; and that, unless he be exceptionally incompetent or exceptionally unselfish, will look after his own interests far better than others can look after them for him, proceed to make the deduction that if each person, taken *individually*, knows his own wants, and can consequently provide for them better than they can be provided for by others ; the whole of these individual persons, taken *collectively*, will likewise know their own wants, and look after their own interests better than they can be looked after by others. Will not such a candidate see that his highest duty lies, not in promising to do for those he is representing what can be far better done by themselves, but in promising that, to the best

of his ability, they shall have fair play in pursuing their own interests and the interests of their children, unhampered by the restrictions and interference of others, so long as they in their turn refrain from aggression and interference with the liberties of their fellows? The policy of interference seems cumbersome and burdensome, that of non-interference easy and direct; yet the "hard thing" is the popular remedy, the simple one the object of contempt.

There is a homely proverb that says, "The wearer knows where the shoe pinches." Suppose now a man with tender corns on certain of his toes, known only to himself, to be in want of a new pair of boots, and that busybodies of both sexes take upon themselves the responsibility of buying this pair of boots. Let us suppose further that they tax him, not only for the boots, but for the expense of their own journeyings to and fro in search for them, and that they finally send him a pair of boots as absolutely misfitting as might be expected when they had not once taken the trouble to try them on him. Would the recipient of such services be inspired with gratitude towards his would-be benefactors? Would he not rather have greatly preferred to be "let alone," to go to the nearest bootmakers for himself and select the boots most comfortable to his feet, at a price most in accordance with the state of his own pocket?

This example may seem absurd, yet it is not a whit more absurd than the Socialism so much in vogue just now—that State and Municipal Socialism which undertakes to provide for the wants of an individual without

the faintest personal acquaintance with the individual himself.

It is in this lack of personal acquaintance with the recipients of aid that Municipal and State assistance fall so far short of Voluntary assistance. Greatly as I value the practice of self-reliance and independence, I am very far indeed from denying the benefits of mutual assistance and co-operation in the alleviation of the numerous ills to which we are all in greater or less degree subject. Nay, more than this. Speaking personally, I hold it a sacred duty that such of us as have inherited property, and are consequently in possession of that leisure which is the result of freedom from necessity to earn our daily bread, shall devote a certain portion of our time and means to the alleviation of the burdens of such of our fellow-creatures as have been less favoured by fortune than ourselves. To recur to my former illustration: so long as it is possible for a man to go to a bootmaker's for himself, it is mischievous folly for anyone else to undertake to go there for him. Yet it is quite possible to imagine the man with feet so tender and inflamed as to render him unable to leave his bed; in which case the services of some relative or friend, or, failing this, some philanthropic person visiting him, would be needful; and being needful, would almost certainly be gratefully appreciated by him. Moreover, though his benefactor would probably be less competent to act for him than he for himself, yet I doubt whether even the most foolish of district visitors would undertake to buy a pair of boots for

another person without either measuring the proposed wearer's feet, or bringing to his house a variety of sizes in order that he shall select the best fitting for himself. Voluntary charity has, no doubt, much to learn—has done in the past an immensity of harm—but the difference between State and Municipal charity and Voluntary charity is that the former by the necessity of the case, seeing that they deal with such enormous masses of people, can never know anything of each person's individual wants; while Voluntary charity is beginning to recognize—slowly, indeed, though I think steadily—the extreme danger of proffering assistance without previously making strict investigation; and investigation in most cases means personal knowledge. Among the many evils of State and municipal Socialism not the least is the fact that, by the increase of taxation it brings upon us, we are deprived of the power to do all that we might do voluntarily. Even granting that in some very few cases State assistance may be as beneficial as Voluntary, the cost of administration that is the invariable clog upon the former, and from which the other is entirely free, must make the latter a more potent factor for good than the former, since its services can be carried on entirely devoid of waste of money in the working.

Among the many distinctions that separate the man of wide experience from the man of narrow, the fully-developed intellect from the immatured, is the greater readiness of the latter to believe in the possibility of sudden cure for long-rooted ailments.

The former, on the other hand, knows that in social as in physical life there is no "royal road" to immediate cure. He is inclined to regard as a charlatan him who professes to effect it, being satisfied himself if, after long and patient watchfulness, he is able to replace the graver symptoms of the disease by symptoms a little less grave. The experienced philanthropist knows that no amount of State regulation of labour will remove those miseries of over-competition that are the result of many generations of improvidence—early marriages, redundant population, and that unwise legislation that interferes between an act and its consequences.

When an advocate is pleading a cause it is often advantageous to him to select the points apparently least likely to be in his favour, leaving those that are obviously on his side to the common-sense and intelligence of the jury. In like manner I will select one or two instances among the multitudinous Socialistic schemes of England and Germany where, if interference with personal freedom to work would ever be justifiable would be so here; the right of such interference having been maintained even by some accustomed to deprecate in most things the interference of the State with the liberty of the individual.

The first that I shall select is the prohibition of women working in mines; and I select this because I suppose that there can hardly be two opinions as to the extreme undesirability of such an occupation for women. But does not this very undesirability in itself show that no woman would select this occu-

pation if a better were open to her? The question does not lie, as is so thoughtlessly assumed, between working or non-working in mines, but between starvation, the workhouse, or working in mines. Surely it is not for the State but for the woman to decide for herself which she will find the least of the three evils.

Moreover, in an over-populated country like England, where the supply of labour is always greater than the demand, it is not likely that the services of any woman would be accepted if she were really incompetent to perform them. No woman would be hired to do very hard manual work unless she were exceptionally big and strong—that is to say, unless she were *physically superior*. What right has the State to step in and say to such a woman, “You shall not profit by your own superiority”?

The next example I select is the prohibition of women to work within four weeks after childbirth. As with my former illustration, I suppose that there will not be two opinions as to the extreme undesirability of a woman resuming work before this period has elapsed. Nay, there will probably be many who will hold with me that the interval of time might with great benefit be prolonged; since it is better for the babe that the mother should remain with it for many months rather than for only four weeks. But the question does not resolve itself into that very simple one, “Shall a mother be forced to remain with her infant for four weeks, or shall she be allowed to absent herself from it?” But it resolves itself into that

extremely complex one, "Shall she remain with her infant and have very little food, either for herself or for it; or shall she absent herself from it and have abundance of food for both?" How is it possible for the State to arrive at this decision; seeing first, how greatly it depends upon the woman's own state of health; and secondly, whether she have an elder child capable of taking charge of the infant? If she be of frail, delicate constitution, have but feeble appetite, and making but a tardy, uncertain convalescence; if, in addition, she have no child old enough to mind the infant, she will assuredly and of her own accord remain at home. Prohibition to work becomes needless. If, on the other hand, she be of strong, vigorous build she will probably have the keen craving for food that is the natural result of healthy convalescence coupled with the support of a healthy babe; in which case I can hardly imagine any more refined cruelty than depriving her of the only means she has—viz., liberty to work—of satisfying those cravings nature is so imperatively forcing upon her. In the one case prohibition to work is needless, in the other it is mischievous. If a woman *cannot* work, why trouble to say she *shall not*? If, on the other hand, she can, and is anxious to provide herself with abundance of food at a time when, both for her own and her child's sake it is of paramount importance that she should have it, the wickedness and folly of legislative interference in matters that are purely personal can hardly be more strongly shown than in this case, which, even by some persons not strongly in favour of State interference, is thought-

lessly assumed to form an exception to the general rule of liberty to work for each individual.

Having proved, then, as I venture to hope I have, how impracticable and mischievous is intermeddling from the State, even when it consists of seeking to protect women from work which is confessedly very hard for them, I will not take up the time of my readers by commenting upon the absolute folly of interfering with the hours of labour a strong man may be permitted to enjoy; regardless entirely of whether the work is congenial to him, regardless of his age or ability, and of the strain involved in the nature of the work itself. Rather let me here, in conclusion, point out *why* Individualism must always be a safer teacher than Legislative Rule. The reason seems to me to be this: If an individual commits a mistake—and who amongst us is entirely free on this score?—the consequences of his mistake are visited upon himself. If the State commits mistakes the consequences fall upon its victims. There is no more wholesome teacher than a dread of consequences, and no thoughtful person will disregard it. The State is not a supernatural entity removed from all earthly temptations, but a collection of persons of good, bad, or indifferent characters like the population at large. Remove from this collection of persons that great safeguard which has been the teacher of every person individually, and the mistakes almost inseparable from daily life will increase to a practically unlimited extent. It takes a very much longer time to repeal an unwise Act of Parliament than to pass it. The errors committed by individuals

are strictly limited in their extent, because every unwise act brings its natural penalty. No true legislator should stand between an act and its consequences until it has been proved beyond possibility of doubt that the offender is incapable of profiting by experience. Then, indeed, it becomes a question whether the legislature shall deprive him of his liberty, or allow him to perish in his folly—a question that, in the present writer's opinion, depends largely upon whether the offender have wife or children, or other persons dependent on him.

Short of this, seeing on the one side that an individual must know his own wants better than a collection of other individuals entirely unacquainted with him can possibly know them; seeing on the other side that this collection of individuals is deprived of that great natural teacher no single individual, taken in his separate capacity, is even for a day without, it seems certain that the less this collection of individuals, *i.e.*, the State, interferes with the liberty each person shall have to look after his own welfare the better. If the State limits herself to seeing that no one of her citizens shall aggress upon the limits of a fellow-citizen, and that each shall scrupulously carry out any contract he may have made with another, she will have done enough. More than this, by undertaking to do but little there will be a greater probability that she will do that little well.

NOTE.

In 1888, when I published a volume of Essays called *Natural Causation*, the fourth essay in the book dealing at some length with the subject of the interference of the State towards the individual, a very able and impartial reviewer, otherwise in agreement with my main argument, asked me how, if I limited the interference of the State to prevention of aggression and enforcement of contract, I would act with regard to the regulation of child labour and to the Factory Acts. For myself, after careful deliberation, I am disposed to question the wisdom of regulating the hours of child labour, for the same reason that I deprecate interference with female labour. No child is precisely the counterpart of another child, and work that will hurt one will not hurt another. The question does not resolve itself into that simple one, shall a child work or play? for in these humane days I believe that there are few adults who do not delight to think of children in the enjoyment of play. But it resolves itself into the complex question: Shall a child have abundance of food, even though he have to relinquish a good deal of play; or shall he have very little food and equally little work? A question that seems to me much easier for a parent to decide than for the State, *until it has been proved that a parent has failed in parental duty*. It is absolutely necessary that a growing, vigorous, healthy boy, who, under any circumstances, is practically never still, shall have much food. Expenditure of energy in growth and exercise peremptorily requires superabundance of nourishment. Food, even with the drawback of hard work, must not be denied him. The little sickly lad, on the other hand, with feeble energy and feeble appetite, must on no account be hardly worked. Too much work for the one

would be as prejudicial as too little food for the other. It is impossible for the State to lay down any hard and fast rule as to the number of hours all children can equally work.

But though I do not believe in any arbitrary regulation of child labour, I think that the term *prevention of aggression* might be made to cover much more than it does, and especially control the behaviour of an adult to a helpless little child. If a child is forced to work to the detriment of his health, and in spite of his own remonstrances, whether by a factory employer or a School Board teacher, I think that there should certainly be legal investigation; the punishment to fall upon the parent or upon the employer, according as it is proved which has been guilty of the greater negligence. Under the plea of "prevention of aggression" the State rightfully protects a child against flogging to any dangerous extent. The same plea might surely have been enough to prevent the barbarity of sending a little chimney-sweep up a hot chimney. In my opinion it should also prevent a child of small mental ability from being crammed with undigested knowledge till he gets brain fever. It seems to me that "prevention of aggression," taken in this extended sense, would bestow all the benefits conferred by the regulation of the hours a child may work, and yet be free from any of the disadvantages inseparable from interference with personal liberty to work; that is to say, no child would be allowed to be injured by overwork, while those children who have the good fortune to be physically and mentally superior to the average child would be freely allowed to profit by their own superiority.

THE HIGHER SECULARISM.

Among such of my readers as have attained middle life there will probably be some who will remember a remarkable symposium contributed to the second number of the *Nineteenth Century*, entitled "The Influence upon Morality of a Decline in Religious Belief"; each article in the symposium having for its writer a distinguished representative of each of the more important forms of faith or no-faith then existing in England.

Time has, to a certain extent, already answered that inquiry. It will not be denied, I think, that the last fifteen years have seen a most important decline in religious belief without any corresponding decrease in morality. Though there is, of course, still room for vast improvement in our domestic and national morals, yet on the whole the alteration has been in the upward direction. Moreover, though—while there is so much timidity among Secularists, and so much hypocrisy among ostensibly religious folk—it is well nigh impossible to procure an accurate ratio between Christian and non-Christian offenders, yet the fact remains that among the more notorious cases that come before the public, whether of fraud or conjugal unfaithfulness, the names of professed secularists are conspicuous by their absence. It is the object of this paper to discover how far this absence is more than a mere coincidence; how far, as is averred by so many

Christians, morality cannot be practised without the incentive of reward in a future life; or how far, as the present writer is inclined to hold, Secularism, rightly understood, must of itself bring about a fuller and more profound comprehension of the factors necessary to make this world nobler and better.

The radical distinction between Christian and Secular ethics is not so much in the means employed by both for the attainment of the two ends as in those ends themselves. The holder of the one system has in view the honour of his Creator, that of the other his own welfare and the welfare of his fellow-creatures. The hoped-for reward of the one is attainment of bliss in a life to come; that of the other, increased happiness and nobility in the life that now is. But since we know nothing of the duties of the next world (even granting there to be one), does it not follow that time and thought devoted to a world of which we can know nothing serve no other purpose save diverting us from a consideration of a world of which it is of paramount importance we should study to the utmost? To know how *wisely to expend* seems to me to be a knowledge as necessary in the region of thought as in practical life; and the spiritually wise man will no more fritter away his time upon useless studies than the worldly wise man will squander his money upon senseless superfluities. Economy of thought is to the full as necessary as economy of money. "While you cannot serve men, how can you serve spirits?" "While you do not know life, what can you know of death?" were two questions Confucius is reported

to have asked of a disciple. Confucius did not deny a future life; he only judged that, since we know nothing of any future world, nor what are its duties, supposing the possibility of another existence, it is wiser not to trouble ourselves about them. Confucius is not the only thinker who taught thus. Spinoza propounded as an axiom, "That a wise man thinks of nothing so little as death, and his meditation is of life not of death." Of late years, though still far too seldom, the same doctrine is even beginning to be preached by the more liberal of Christian teachers, though I think that it is certainly not in harmony with orthodox Christianity, nor even with the teaching of Christ Himself. Thus Principal Caird, in one of his sermons, says: "I do not hesitate to say that the great and paramount aim of religion is not to prepare for another world, but to make the best of this; or more correctly stated, to make this world better, wiser, and happier. It is to be good and to do the most good we can now and here, and to help others to be and do the same. It is to seek with all our might the highest welfare of the world we live in, and the realization of its ideal greatness, and nobleness, and blessedness." *

I need scarcely point out that the doctrine thus preached by Secularism is far removed from the injunction falsely associated with Epicureanism, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." Though the

* I regret to say that I can give no reference for the above extract, nor do I know whether the sermon from which it is taken is published. Some years ago I saw a newspaper report of it, and thought the passage so good and true and so unusual from a pulpit that I copied it out, but, unfortunately, omitted to enter the name and date of the newspaper.

higher Secularism preaches no ascetic contempt for the pleasures of the senses, it is behind none in recognizing that the life or spirit is more than meat, and the body than raiment, and holds that the beauty of holiness is sufficiently attractive to require no other reward than itself. However freely we may acknowledge the nobility of much of the Christian teaching, it cannot be denied, I think, that in its distrust—I might almost say its disbelief—of virtue as an end in itself, Christianity stands on a lower level than the majority of other ethical systems. As Mr. Lecky has well pointed out:—

“Among Christians the ideals have commonly been either supernatural beings, or men who were in connection with supernatural beings; and these men have usually been Jews or saints, whose lives were of such a nature as to isolate them from most human sympathies, and to efface, so far as possible, the national type. Among the Greeks and Romans the examples of virtue were usually their own fellow-countrymen, men who had lived in the same moral atmosphere, struggled for the same ends, acquired their reputation in the same spheres, exhibited in all their intensity the same national characteristics as their admirers.”*

Thus those men, who were most distinctively Christian in an age when Christianity was more vividly realized than it is now, thought that they were best serving their Creator and ensuring future happiness for themselves by endeavouring to trans-

* *History of European Morals*, vol. i. p. 174.

form themselves into something as far removed from human nature as possible. They were not content with giving greater honour to the spirit—a homage all right-thinking persons, whether religious or secular, would sanction—but, failing to recognize the subtle interdependence of mind and body, conceived that the highest homage to the former lay in complete contempt and neglect of the latter. It was not enough to refrain from gluttony. The body was starved till the brain became diseased. It was not enough to refrain from sensuality. The love of wife and child and brethren, the domestic joys and sorrows that have formed such powerful factors in developing the animal nature into the spiritual, were equally rejected by them. The higher secularists, on the other hand, have ever looked upon virtue as an end in itself; an end much more difficult to attain without that double possession, “a healthy mind in a healthy body.”

“We do not love virtue because it gives us pleasure,” says Marcus Aurelius, “but it gives us pleasure because we love it”; and Spinoza teaches that “Beatitude is not the reward of virtue, but virtue itself; nor do we enjoy true happiness because we restrain our lusts; on the contrary, it is because we enjoy true happiness that we are able to restrain our lusts.” The Christian notion that a disbelief in immortality will lead to decline in a virtuous life Spinoza treats with the contempt it merits, such notions appearing to him “not less absurd than it were to suppose that a man, because he did not

believe that he could nourish his body with wholesome food to all eternity, should put himself up on a *régime* of poisons; or, because not believing that his soul was eternal or immortal, he should therefore elect to live like one demented and without reason." Nor are the pleasures of a virtuous life to be denied because the virtuous man sometimes reaps as his reward nothing but pain and misery. Such misery arises not from the virtue that is in the man himself, but from the lack of virtue that is in his fellow-creatures. And this brings us to the supreme importance of the social influence.

"There is no single thing in Nature," says Spinoza, "more useful to man than the example of the man who lives in conformity with the dictates of reason. . . . The highest good of those who abide by virtue is common to all, and all may equally enjoy it. The good which every votary of virtue desires for himself he also desires for his fellow-men. The good which a man loves and desires he will love and desire the more constantly if he sees that others love and desire it also, and so will he strive to make others love it. And because this good is common to all, and all may equally share, he will further strive that all should enjoy it, and this so much the more as he himself enjoys it the more."

Coming to our own time, Herbert Spencer asserts that "each has a private interest in public morals and profits by improving them. The improvement of others, physically, intellectually, and morally, personally concerns each, since their imperfections tell in

raising the cost of all the commodities he buys, in increasing the taxes and rates he pays, and in the losses of time, trouble, and money daily brought on him by others' carelessness, stupidity, or unconscientiousness. . . . This increase of personal benefit achieved by benefiting others is but partially achieved where a selfish motive prompts the seemingly unselfish act; it is fully achieved only when the act is really unselfish. For obviously it is the spontaneous outflow of good nature, not in the larger acts of life only, but in all its details, which generates in those around the attachments prompting unstinted benevolence. . . . While, then, there is one kind of other-regarding action, furthering the prosperity of fellow-citizens at large, which admits of being deliberately pursued from motives that are remotely self-regarding—the condition being that personal well-being depends in large measure on the well-being of society—there is an additional kind of other-regarding action having in it no element of conscious self-regard, which, nevertheless, conduces greatly to egoistic satisfactions."

In endorsing the preceding remarks I do not wish it to be inferred that I believe in any sudden and miraculous disappearance of evil from the face of the earth through the agency of secular ethics. As Mr. Leslie Stephen has well remarked, "There are some men who cannot be made good." But supernatural ethics are equally powerless when dealing with such men. The almost universal practice—accompanying such a vast majority of religions—of substituting the sacrifice of innocent persons or animals for genuine reformation of

life, testifies to the fact that though all men may be anxious to escape the consequences of their sins, some men will never be induced to forsake sin itself. With such men the best teachers are perhaps the gallows and the gaol. But, after all, we must remember that such men are in the minority—a minority that, as the laws of heredity and environment grow to be more fully comprehended, we may not unreasonably hope will slowly decrease. With that vast majority of persons who, recognizing to the full the beauty and usefulness of a virtuous life, yet fall short of their ideal, it seems to me that secular ethics, or the study of laws of morality affecting this world alone, should prove a more trustworthy agent than supernaturalism, since time expended on the study of the unknowable must interfere with the full study of the knowable. While sympathies directed from the sorrows and joys of fellow-creatures of a like nature with our own will make us less prompt in rendering them the genuine assistance that only comes from an intelligent comprehension of their wants.

Cobbett's Advice to Young Men.

IF we examine into the causes that make one book of ephemeral fame, and another of interest more or less enduring, we shall find the chief among them to be, not so much superiority of diction or accuracy of description—though these of course must be allowed some weight—as that the one deals with the broad essential principles of human nature common to all; the other only with its accidents or details. Why, for instance, is John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* known to all English-speaking people, and his *Holy War* known only to the student? Let Mr. Froude answer for us: "In the *Pilgrim's Progress* we are among genuine human beings. Who does not know Mr. Pliable, Mr. Obstinate, Mr. Facing-both-ways, Mr. Feeble Mind, and all the rest? They are representative realities, flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone. The human actors in *The Holy War* are parts of men; special virtues, special vices; allegories in fact as well as in name, which all Bunyan's genius can only occasionally substantiate into persons."*

It is this distinctly human quality that has made the book to which I now call attention stand out among the numerous "counsels of perfection" that

* FROUDE'S *Bunyan*, p. 119. (English Men of Letters Series.)

appear from time to time; to do some good, we may hope, and then fade entirely from remembrance; while it is this same human interest that fully justifies Messrs. Ward and Lock in including this book among their "Shilling Library of Famous Books for All Time," and thus bringing it within the reach of any desiring to purchase it.

William Cobbett was born in Surrey in 1762, and was by origin simply an English peasant. His father found leisure to teach him to read and write, but beyond these rudiments of knowledge he was entirely self-taught. For a brief period he was engaged in London as copying clerk to a lawyer; but the drudgery of the desk was distasteful to him, and in 1780 he enlisted as a common soldier in a regiment destined for American service. From this time almost to his death his life was one of extreme vicissitudes; and these vicissitudes, with his success in overcoming them, form his apology for taking upon himself the office of writing a book of *Advice to Young Men*. What man of common humanity, he says, in his introduction, "having, by good luck, missed being engulfed in a quagmire or quicksand, will withhold from his neighbours a knowledge of the peril, without which the dangerous spots are not to be approached?"

The full title of the book is *Advice to Young Men and (incidentally) to Young Women in the Middle and Higher Ranks of Life, in a series of Letters addressed to a Youth, a Bachelor, a Lover, a Husband, a Father, a Citizen or Subject*. They are written in terse, vigorous, and exceedingly quaint language; always grammatical,

though never exactly polished. If they will not exalt men into saints or heroes, as might some of the finer poems of Lowell, to which I drew attention in my last paper in this magazine, they will inspire them with honourable independence, sturdy self-reliance, and moral courage; in a word, with true manliness. Though Cobbett does not insist so much as Lowell upon the duty of devotion to the service of others, he is unsparing in his contempt upon those who, while they have a brain or body that can work, will yet allow themselves or their children to become a burden upon others. After all, it is given only to the few to be saints or heroes. To be honourable, independent men and women should be within the reach of all. Homely as is much of his advice, yet in essentials Cobbett breathes the same spirit that Tennyson, writing from his more cultured standpoint, has made familiar in the well-known lines:—

“Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.
Yet not for power (power of herself
Would come uncall'd for), but to live by law,
Acting the law we live by without fear;
And, because right is right, to follow right
Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence.”

Cobbett differs from the majority of preachers to youth in that he openly avows Happiness to be not only a natural, but an innocent and even a praiseworthy aim. But happiness with him does not mean a life of low or unworthy pleasures, but the gratification of all innocent and healthy desires—*i.e.*, the attainment

of a healthy mind in a healthy body, the possession of a good wife and loving children, the gratification of honourable ambition in his career. How best to attain these blessings is the subject matter of all the letters; but the groundwork, the foundation stone of all the subsequent letters, is laid in the first—that of the Youth. The one virtue to be aimed at in early youth—for without it the practice of every other virtue is hampered throughout a man's entire life—is a habit of *independence*. "I suppose you," he says, "in the middle rank of life. Happiness ought to be your great object, and it is to be found only in independence." "Start, I beseech you, with a conviction firmly fixed on your mind that you have no right to live in this world; that being of hale body and sound mind, you have no *right* to any earthly existence without doing *work* of some sort or other, unless you have ample fortune whereon to live clear of debt; and that, even in that case, you have no right to breed children to be kept by others, or to be exposed to the chance of being so kept." "He who lives upon anything except his own labour is incessantly surrounded by rivals, his grand resource is that servility in which he is always liable to be surpassed." Yet since in early youth it is very difficult to earn more than a small annual income, how shall this independence be obtained? Cobbett answers the query in this way: "The great source of independence the French express in a precept of three words—*vivre de peu*—which I have always very much admired. To *live upon little* is the great security against slavery, and this precept extends to dress and other

things, besides food and drink." The remainder of this first letter is mainly occupied with a detailed account of those superfluities that can best be dispensed with. Doubtless we shall not all agree in these details. Tastes differ in different individuals. Cobbett's own pet aversion was *tea* and other "*slops*," as he calls them, since they yield so little nourishment commensurate with the expense, while they often do the health harm. But, however we may differ as to details, the good sound sense that breathes almost through every page of this first letter is beyond discussion. A young man's wealth is to be judged not so much by what he receives as by what he spends. He who does not adapt his expenditure to his income must have to face, sooner or later, the miseries of bankruptcy; and the history of individual as of national decay teaches us that its source is generally an undue love of Luxury. Second only in importance to economy in the attainment of independence is a habit of *perseverance*. Cobbett endorses the well-known fact that men fail more often from lack of perseverance than from lack of talent! but he believes that this habit is not difficult to acquire if we will only begin young enough. "Five or six triumphs over temptation to indolence or despair lay the foundation of certain success, and what is of still more importance, fix in you the habit of perseverance."

Cobbett's second letter is addressed to a Bachelor, or young man. He assumes that the "Youth" of his first letter has now arrived at years of discretion, that he is earning an honourable independence for himself, and that habits of economy and perseverance have been

definitely formed. The great lesson, then, needful to the young man who has shown himself capable of earning money is how best to manage it. This second letter, therefore, is almost entirely occupied with the question of *expenditure*. Two golden rules he would have followed: Pay ready money for everything; avoid speculation. He despises men and women who think a due attention to small domestic details beneath their notice. If they entrust the management of their affairs to others; if, for instance, the mistress of the house authorizes her servant to order anything she likes from tradesmen calling at her house, she will find debt accumulating upon her almost before she is aware that it has begun. It is not only the direct but the indirect consequences of debt that are so disastrous. "A man oppressed with pecuniary cares and dangers must be next to a miracle if he have his mind in a state fit for intellectual labours." No intellectual man, therefore, should disregard the importance of attending to his pecuniary matters, for by so doing he is guarding himself from one of the most hampering influences in the prosecution of all mental work. In the opinion of the present writer this second letter is the wisest in the series; there is scarcely a detail that will not approve itself to all who have had any experience in household or pecuniary management; and a young man could hardly expend a shilling (practically ninepence) more wisely than in the purchase of this book, were it only for the good sense contained in this second letter.

The third letter is to a Lover on the choice of a wife, and is one of the most amusing in the book.

Here, as elsewhere, Cobbett considers himself peculiarly fitted to give advice, having been so singularly fortunate in his own choice. (It is impossible to deny that Cobbett betrays an extreme egotism at times. Yet somehow the egotism, excessive as it is, is seldom offensive, while it is often amusing.) There are eight qualities a man ought to desire in a wife, and Cobbett gives them in the following order: 1, Chastity; 2, Sobriety; 3, Industry; 4, Frugality; 5, Cleanliness; 6, Knowledge of Domestic Affairs; 7, Good Temper; 8, Beauty. The first quality comprises not only purity of life, but "perfect modesty in word, deed, and even thought, and is so essential that without it no female is fit to be a wife." With his usual sense he draws a distinction between *prudery* and true modesty, the one more often than not appearing where the other is absent.

In like manner "sobriety" does not limit itself to abstinence from intoxication, but includes absolute discretion of conduct. Indiscretion may be pardonable enough in very young girls; but in Cobbett's opinion, if a girl is not old enough to be discreet she is not old enough to be married. "He is the happy husband who can go away at a moment's warning, leaving his house and his family with as little anxiety as he quits an inn; not more fearing to find on his return anything wrong than he would fear a discontinuation of the rising and setting of the sun." The next four qualities—Industry, Frugality, Cleanliness, and Knowledge of Domestic Affairs—are, as may be imagined from Cobbett's two preceding letters, matters of paramount importance, and he devotes several pages in discussing

the best means a man should employ in assuring himself that a girl has these qualities before he places himself in the position of a definitely-accepted lover. Some of this advice is sufficiently amusing, and one hopes that a good deal of it now, if it ever were, is no longer needed. For instance, maidens of the "middle and higher classes" are surely not so wanting in cleanliness as to make requisite the following advice to the would-be lover: "Get a glance, just a glance, at her *poll* if you have any doubt upon the subject, and if you find there or *behind the ears* what the Yorkshire people call *grime*, the sooner you cease your visits the better!"* Again, while rightly laying stress upon the necessity of a knowledge of Domestic Affairs in a woman, he yet cannot shake himself free from the prejudice that love of music or other accomplishment will militate against her performance of domestic duties. He forgets that, however admirably she attends to these, they cannot possibly (at all events till children come) occupy the whole of her day unless she hopelessly mismanage her time, and that a young

* It would have been wiser, I think, had Cobbett not described his letters on the title-page as addressed to the middle and *higher* ranks; for it is impossible not to see that he has but a very slight acquaintance with the habits and customs of the latter class. Doubtless, many of his remarks apply to all classes, because the "one touch of nature" in us all penetrates deeper than any class distinction. Yet each class has its special duties, and the duties specially incumbent upon the wealthy and leisured classes—the exercise of a generous hospitality, a wise philanthropy, the encouragement of the arts and sciences, and general furtherance of the amenities of life—are hardly touched upon by him. Yet these qualities are almost as essential in persons of large means as frugality and industry are to persons of small means.

wife will be far less likely to suffer from *ennui* during the husband's absence, or tempted to waste money in gadding abroad—to say nothing of her being a more interesting companion—if she be absorbed in the delight of some intellectual pursuit than if she be without mental resource. On the other hand, it must be remembered that in Cobbett's day female education was at a much lower ebb than it is now, and that a good deal of the contempt he heaped upon “boarding-school accomplishments” was fully deserved because they were so thoroughly superficial.

The question of Good and Bad Temper in a wife he discusses with amusing vehemence; the kind of temper most distasteful to himself being the melancholy temper. “The best way,” he finally decides, “is to avoid a connexion which is to give you a life of wailing and sighs.” Only second in distastefulness he finds the cold or indifferent temper. “From a girl who always receives you with the same civil smile, lets you, at your own good pleasure, depart with the same, and who, when you take her by the hand, holds her cold fingers as straight as sticks, I say, God in His mercy preserve me.”

Though Cobbett places Beauty last in the scale of qualities desirable in a wife, he thinks it by no means unimportant. It is right to add that *beauty* with him includes animation, and charm of manner, quite as much as regularity of feature. He cannot understand how any man could marry an old or unattractive woman for her wealth, when he could win a penniless girl in the first flush of youth and beauty. To the well-worn

objection, "Beauty is but skin deep," he answers somewhat quaintly, "But it is very agreeable though, for all that"; with which simple and natural explanation it would have been better, I think, had he remained content; for some of the reasons he cites in support—such, for instance, as that a pretty girl will be less inclined to waste time and money on her appearance than one who is ugly—seem to me hardly borne out by the facts. On the whole this letter, though it is by no means wanting in shrewd sound sense, is yet, I think, more open to discussion than the two preceding.

The fourth letter, that to a Husband, is in many ways admirable, though it necessarily goes over a good deal of the ground occupied by the first two letters. For if it is necessary for a bachelor to be careful of expenditure, it is still more needful that a married man shall be. As we have seen, Cobbett did not include "dowry" as among the requisites in a wife; yet, having brought him no fortune, a husband has certainly a right to expect that by her thrift, industry, and conscientiousness she shall at least be no burden to him, but shall save him almost what another girl might have brought him in hard cash. "The first thing of all," he says, "be the rank in life what it may, is to convince her of the necessity of *moderation in expense*; and to make her clearly see the justice of beginning to act upon the presumption that there are children coming, that they are to be provided for, and that she is to *assist* in making that provision." He then proceeds to enter into details concerning the needless extravagance of young married

couples. Many of his remarks apply even more to our day than to his own, since I think a love of luxury, especially among women, is on the increase rather than the decrease. The first subject he comments upon is on the folly of keeping more servants than are absolutely necessary. Why should a young mother relinquish the natural and generally pleasurable duties of washing and dressing her children, or instructing them during their earlier years, to paid strangers? In food and wages a good servant seldom costs less than fifty pounds a year. Let the wife try and do with two, where her neighbours perhaps have four. Let her put by this hundred pounds every year as her own savings, her own contribution towards launching her children into the world. She will then prove a greater fortune to her husband than a girl with a little money of her own who spends more than she brings. Cobbett believes—though this remark, perhaps, is less applicable to our own generation*—that this shirking of natural duties does not arise from dislike, or even very much from idleness, but rather from a paltry, foolish notion that it is *ladylike* to be helpless. As may be imagined, Cobbett, with his sturdy, robust character, has no admiration for the “fine lady” who thinks it “genteel” to do nothing. Next to extravagance he is disposed to think *jealousy*, especially in the wife, the great bane of married existence; but here he is more inclined to take the wife’s part than the husband’s. If a man will only take care to show his wife by every means in his power that he

* Happily, I think that helplessness in women is less admired than it used to be.

prefers her society to that of every other woman in the world, he will adopt the surest method of causing her jealousy to disappear. Yet Cobbett also acknowledges that where there is a great natural proneness to this quality it is extremely difficult to prevent it. Still the husband has no right to be angry with his wife till he has assured himself by rigid self-examination that he has never given her the faintest grounds for it.

In his letters to a Father, Cobbett lays great stress upon the importance of parents setting a good example to their children. He thinks that there is such a natural tendency to imitativeness in children—especially of their elders—that a good example effects, indirectly, far more than scolding or punishment directly. He shows himself, I think, rather in advance of his time in the stress he lays upon the *physical* well-being of a child; rightly thinking that, in addition to the pleasurable feeling resulting from good health, there is hardly any walk in life which is not more or less impeded by bodily feebleness.* In some of his details concerning the bringing-up of children, many in this more kindly generation will probably not altogether agree. For instance, Cobbett “deprecates *romances* of every description. It is impossible that they can do any good, and they may do a great deal of harm.” Doubtless, far too much time is spent both by boys and girls

* I have sometimes wondered that, considering the great stress Cobbett lays upon the advantage strong health has in the race of life, he has not included healthfulness among the qualities essential in a wife. Possibly the interpretation is, that the bright, rosy, cheerful, animated kind of beauty he himself admires in woman presupposes, and therefore includes, a certain amount of physical well-being.

over romances, and youth should be specially guarded against novels of a pernicious tendency. Yet the use must not be confounded with the abuse. The gift of imagination is such a source of real delight in itself, that the wiser parent is he who judges it to be as a gift requiring control and direction, rather than allowed to grow stunted or even perish altogether from lack of use. Nevertheless, however much some of us will differ from Cobbett in certain of his details, the broad principles running through this fifth letter are well worthy of attention.

The last letter, addressed to the Citizen, is the shortest and, I am inclined to think, the most inadequate in the book. Yet the words with which it concludes may form a fitting conclusion to this brief summary of Cobbett's Advice to Young Men: "Health, without which life is not worth having, you will hardly fail to secure by early rising, exercise, sobriety, and abstemiousness as to food. Happiness or misery is in the *mind*. It is the mind that lives, and the length of life ought to be measured by the number and importance of our ideas, and not by the number of our days. Never, therefore, esteem men merely on account of their riches or their station. Respect goodness, find it where you may. Honour talent wherever you behold it unassociated with vice; but honour it most when accompanied with exertion, and especially when executed in the cause of truth and justice; and, above all things, hold it in honour when it steps forward to protect defenceless innocence against the attacks of powerful guilt."

On Mind as Controlled by Matter.

WHEN studying for the first time the habit of bees, I still remember, though now many years ago, the surprise I felt on learning that the larvæ of the worker-bee could be developed into an adult queen-bee simply by process of feeding. For about eleven months the queen lays worker eggs alone; then she begins to lay eggs which will produce drones, and during this time she occasionally deposits an egg in a royal cell, which is destined to become a queen. But now, supposing the queen to die before she has had time to lay the royal eggs, what happens? An egg of the ordinary worker species is carefully watched till it becomes a maggot, which is then fed by the workers with a very nutritive food, only given to such larvæ as are to be developed into queens. On the sixteenth day the little worker maggot, which if fed in the ordinary way would have developed a few days later into a small, intensely active bee, with energies apparently concentrated on the welfare of the community, collecting honey for the present, storing it for the future, lavishing unselfish devotion upon the queen, remorselessly destroying the drones, becomes a relatively large bee, majestic, inert, receiving homage,

bestowing none; her sole energies seeming to be bent on her one duty of laying eggs; save for a kind of venomous jealousy which would compel her to sting to death all the younger queens were they not protected by the devoted little workers.

With certain transforming effects of food I was already familiar. Every child who has kept silkworms knows how greatly the silk varies with the food given to the worm. But that the psychical or moral nature could be thus moulded was a revelation to me—a revelation that, at that time of my life, partook somewhat of the nature of a revulsion. Yet it set me pondering. Gradually I began to suspect that there might be a more intimate connection between food and character than I had previously imagined. There are few children who do not become "cross" if kept waiting beyond the usual hour for a meal; and though, as childhood is replaced by youth, self-respect and proper regard for others will make us conceal the outward manifestation, yet the adult, almost equally with the child, is conscious of an unpleasant proneness to irritability if his body be exhausted by want of food or over-fatigue. From this I began to consider the phenomena arising from intoxication. It seemed so wonderful to me to think that a certain quantity of alcohol taken into the system could really turn a placid man into a furious one, a refined man into a vulgar one, or transform a sensible man into a fool. Almost equally strange seemed to me the action of anæsthetics. Let a victim to some disease or accident inhale a small quantity of chloroform, and, instead

of writhing under the surgeon's knife, he becomes insensible to all pain. Consciousness for the moment is *extinguished*. *Where has it gone? What has become of it?* I began to understand how some savages have been led to worship as gods the strange properties of plants and minerals; for is not their influence upon humanity weird, magical, entirely eluding human explanation? And are there not some poisons so baneful that the smallest quantity is sufficient instantaneously to destroy life altogether? Doubtless as we grow more accustomed to them these phenomena excite in us less surprise than when they came upon us in all the freshness of novelty; yet it is by "not thinking" rather than by "thinking" that they do so. As Huxley well remarked, "The student of Nature wonders the more and is astonished the less the more conversant he becomes with her operations."

This perception of the powerful, and at bottom entirely incomprehensible, influence that Matter has over Mind, did not make me a Materialist in any extreme sense of the word. Nor am I yet one. For strangely as mind is affected by material properties, it is affected quite as strangely by immaterial. As Tyndall has described it, "We stand in the presence of two incomprehensibles, instead of one incomprehensible." A glass of champagne may give us a feeling of gentle exhilaration, but a piece of good news exhilarates us, not only more powerfully, but more permanently. We all know how success, or sudden freedom from any great anxiety, invigorates our physical as well as our mental natures; for, as

Herbert Spencer has tersely put it, "There is no tonic like happiness."

Yet it seemed to me that we have greater control over the material than the immaterial; it being easier, for instance, to regulate diet than to command success; and that this being so, we must learn to call nothing common nor unclean, but consider a careful investigation into the influences of food, medicine, and climate as beneath the notice neither of philosopher nor moralist. "Let us reverently, but honestly, look the question in the face," says the late Professor Tyndall. "Divorced from matter, where is life? Whatever our *faith* may say, our *knowledge* shows them to be indissolubly joined. Every meal we eat and every cup we drink illustrates the mysterious control of mind by matter." If we will only be honest with ourselves, it will be impossible to deny the very great dependence Character has upon Food and Climate. Who are the strongest denouncers of views approaching the materialistic? The clergy. Who are the most ardent crusaders against the vice of intemperance? The more earnest and hard-working among our clergy. Yet every exertion that they make in the cause of temperance is an unconscious admission of the power matter—in the form of alcohol taken in excess—has in deteriorating the moral character.

Nor is it alone such grave faults as arise from intemperance that are thus distinctly within our own control by proper regulation of diet. The miseries arising from an irritable temper can often be prevented by the same means. Many a man has been

driven to seek sympathy elsewhere than in his own home, because of the unhappy temper of those of his own household. Yet, though no doubt there are cases where temper is the direct result of selfishness or natural unamiability, in a very large proportion of cases it is caused by irritable nerves, arising from physical weakness. However innocent the cause the results are equally deleterious. It would be difficult to compute the immense amount of misery that might have been spared had women been taught the paramount duty it is to endeavour to keep their bodies in health by proper attention to food and exercise, because of the greater ease with which thereby they would be enabled to dispense that genial cheerfulness and sunshine which forms so powerful a factor in keeping a home happy and pure. It is ignorance, not knowledge, that makes so many women of modern life regard as beneath their notice a proper attention to household details.

"Of the two elements that compose the moral condition of mankind," says Mr. Lecky, "our generalized knowledge is almost restricted to one. We know much of the ways in which political, social, or intellectual causes act upon character, but scarcely anything of the natural moral diversities of individuals or races. I think, however, that most persons who reflect upon the subject will conclude that the progress of medicine, revealing the causes of different moral predispositions, is likely to place a very large measure of knowledge on this point within our reach. Of all the great branches of human knowledge medicine is

that in which the accomplished results are most obviously imperfect and provisional. . . . The medicine of inhalation is still in its infancy; and yet it is by inhalation that Nature produces most of her diseases and effects most of her cures. The medical power of electricity, which, of all known agencies, bears most resemblance to life, is almost unexplored. . . . But in the eyes both of the philanthropist and of the philosopher the greatest of all results to be expected in this, or perhaps any other field, are, I conceive, to be looked for in the study of the relations between our physical and our moral natures. He who raises moral pathology to a science, expanding, systematizing, and applying many fragmentary observations that have been already made, will probably take a place among the master intellects of mankind. The fastings and bleedings of the mediæval monk, the treatment of nervous diseases, the moral changes that accompany the successive stages of physical development, the instances of diseases which have altered, sometimes permanently, the whole complexion of the character, and have acted through the character upon all the intellectual judgments, are examples of the kind of facts with which such a judgment would deal. Mind and body are so closely connected that even those who most earnestly protest against materialism readily admit that each acts continually upon the other. . . . It is probable that this action extends to all parts of our moral constitution, that every passion or characteristic tendency has a physical, predisposing cause, and that, if we were acquainted with these, we might treat

by medicine the many varieties of moral disease as systematically as we now treat physical disease. In addition to its incalculable practical importance, such knowledge would have a great philosophical value, throwing a new light upon the filiation of our moral qualities, enabling us to treat exhaustively the moral influence of climate, and withdrawing the great question of the influence of race from the impressions of isolated observers to place it on the firm basis of experiment." *

And Dr. Maudesley says, "There is not an organ in the body which is not in intimate relation with the brain, by means of its paths of nervous communication, which has not, so to speak, a special correspondence with it through internuncial fibres, and which does not, therefore, affect more or less plainly and specially its function as an order of mind. It is not merely that a palpitating heart may cause anxiety and apprehension, or a disordered liver gloomy feelings; but there are good reasons to believe that each organ has its specific influence on the constitution and function of mind—an influence not yet to be set forth scientifically, because it is exerted on that unconscious mental life which is the basis of all that we consciously feel or think." †

If the importance of an office may be estimated from the importance of the results depending upon it, there is hardly an office so all-important and therefore so honourable as that assigned by common consent in

* *History of European Morals*, vol. i. pp. 157-159, 7th edition.

† *Responsibility in Mental Disease*, p. 17.

all nations and ages to women—the proper regulation of a household. The pity of it is that they have been so seldom taught to comprehend its full significance—a significance that, when the doctrine of heredity is taken into consideration, becomes almost terrible in its far-reaching responsibility. “The longer I live,” Sydney Smith is credited with saying, “the more I am convinced that the apothecary is of more importance than Seneca, and that half the unhappiness in the world proceeds from food pressing in the wrong place. In the same manner old friendships are destroyed by toasted cheese, and hard, salted meat has led to suicide. Unpleasant feelings of the body produce correspondent sensations in the mind, and a great sense of wretchedness is sketched out by a morsel of indigestible and misguided food.” Although, of course, we must allow for a certain amount of humorous exaggeration in the statement, it yet contains a substratum of real substantial truth too valuable to be passed over with a smile. But it seems to me that the sensible housewife who, by long practice, has come to understand what foods are likely to agree or disagree with those for whom she has the responsibility of catering, should be regarded as of greater efficacy than the “apothecary”; for she may prevent what the other can only cure.

But though no doubt Character can be thus powerfully modified by physical agents, far be it from me to under-estimate the importance of immaterial agents also. That the human will grows by exercising it cannot, I think, be questioned. No thoughtful

person will refuse homage to those who conquer temptation through self-control and courage. The admiration felt for a "good man struggling with adversity" has passed into a proverb. If I seem to lay undue stress upon the importance of paying regard to our physical condition, it is only because moralists of all ages have rightly inculcated the supreme necessity of cultivating the Will. Yet as we are composite beings, strangely combined of mind and matter, it seems to me that they have unduly kept in the background the duty it is with all of us to avail ourselves of those physical agents that play so great a part in the formation of a virtuous character. After all, if he who conquereth temptation doeth well, doth not he who preventeth it do better?

And this notwithstanding that the very act of moral conquest often lays the seed of greater conquest to come. As has been well said, "There is a soul of goodness even in things evil." For instance, to bear disease bravely, whether moral or physical, when it comes, is a distinct good; while illness, moreover, often has the power of reviving between relatives the love that seemed, perhaps, before we had the discipline of adversity, to be on the wane. Yet however nobly we may have borne our affliction, however grateful we may be for the love and tenderness with which we have been surrounded, we do not wantonly throw ourselves into the infection of another fever, nor bring about another accident. Notwithstanding the distinct good that has been mingled with our sorrow, we yet recognize that the amount of evil has

so overbalanced the good that, for the sake of others, as well as for our own sakes, we should not risk a repetition of it. It is the same with any sudden loss of fortune. Though there are individual cases probably known to all of us where loss of fortune has had a distinctly salutary influence, transforming the idle and self-indulgent into the self-restrained and industrious, no man having a wife and children dependent upon him would deem it right wantonly to throw away his fortune. The like analogy holds goods in the realm of Ethics. Though we most of us require, in our present stage of moral evolution, shower as well as sunshine to enable us to attain our highest growth, yet we can have recourse to some less drastic self-discipline than wantonly running into needless temptation. After all, we must remember that in each of us there is a strictly limited amount of energy; and if we employ so large a proportion as is necessary in the exhaustive but negative process of nobly enduring great physical agony, or wrestling with strong moral temptation, we shall have so much the less to expend in active and positive good. "I believe I have often saved that boy a fit of furious mania by putting a leech to his nose," said a physician to Dr. Maudesley of a boy with a very violent temper, who had been placed under his charge. The employment of this great physical preventive would not, I imagine, keep the physician from doing all he could in educating the boy's will as well.

Metaphorically speaking, I suspect that to most of

our sins and failings there is a "leech," or appropriate physical agent, we might apply; and if so, it seems to me to be not only justifiable but our bounden duty to endeavour to discover what it is and avail ourselves of it. Nor need our moralists fear that by lessening temptation there will be so little for the Will to do that it may degenerate from lack of exercise. In the best of us, I fear, there is too much of the "old Adam" left not to require the assistance of both agents. Moreover, in those temptations that arise from external causes—in the gloom that arises from disappointed affection or ambition—in the nervous irritability that arises from worry or great mental strain—no attention to physical agents will be sufficient to cope with them unless we practise in addition stern self-control. But because we acknowledge the duty of the latter, is that any reason for refusing to avail ourselves of the assistance of the former?

*On the Wisdom of Looking at the
Bright Side of Life.*

I SUPPOSE that there are few of us who have attained even early middle life so happy as to be able to say, "I have never made a mistake." So certain is it that, as we wend our way through life's journey, the most cautious of us, simply by reason of inexperience, must make some mistakes, that there is a saying almost grown into a proverb, "He who has never made a mistake has attempted little of difficulty or value." Yet amid much that is distinctly discouraging to high endeavour, this consciousness of failure brings with it one salutary lesson: it teaches us to be more lenient and tender in our judgment of others. It will hardly be denied, I think, that the old and middle-aged are more kindly critics than the young, who—often in proportion to the height of their own aspirations—become stern judges of such of their elders as have fallen short of their own young ideal. Nor is such youthful sternness altogether to be condemned. He who in very early life is extremely tolerant of failure in others is apt to be also too tolerant of his own. It is right, I think, for all of us who have high aspirations to be dissatisfied with those who come short of our ideals till we have been taught

by our own experience the difficulty there is in realizing them.

"If Nature put not forth her power
About the opening of the flower,
Who is it that could live an hour?"*

I think it was the German poet Goethe who, on hearing a father complain that his son aimed too high, said, "My friend, do not rebuke your son for his aspirations. If young people are not encouraged to soar, they will too frequently learn to grovel." Moreover, if we did not sometimes attempt that which is beyond our powers, we might never succeed in doing even the little we shall accomplish. No one can become fully cognisant of his own limitations till he has been taught them by the painful discipline of repeated failure. Let us, then, who have arrived at sober middle life, be on our guard how we check the aspirations of the young. Let us rather do our utmost to encourage, to sympathize, to inspire; even though we may also feel it right to add a word of caution or warning in order to protect them from the pitfalls we have not escaped ourselves. And yet, in spite of all our encouragement and sympathy, or of the true admiration we may feel for their young ideals, it will be difficult, I think, for such of us as are most conscious of our own shortcomings not to be inwardly feeling, as we listen to their outpourings, somewhat as Carlyle when he wrote in his *Frederick the Great*:—

"What will he grow to? Probably to something considerable. Very certainly to something far short of his aspirations, far different from his own hopes and the world's concerning him. It is not We, it is Father Time, that does the controlling and fulfilling of our hopes, and strange work he makes of them and of us."

* TENNYSON'S *Two Voices*.

Yet it seems to me that it is wiser to teach the young not to shelter themselves too easily beneath the shoulders of "Father Time"; though doubtless none of us can entirely escape that combined influence of Place and Time, which we call our Environment. Among the many wise sayings of Confucius there is one that I am very fond of: "When the archer misses the centre of the target he turns round and seeks for the cause of failure in himself." If we wish to be taught by our mistakes, and to avoid any future repetition of them—which is the truest use to which we can put them—let us beware how we lay the blame of our failures on fate or ill-luck. It is to Confucius, too, I think, that we owe the wise injunction: "Help a man round one corner; take heed how you help him round a second." While I have great compassion for a man who commits a mistake, and but little condemnation for him who repeats it once (for some are slower in acquiring experience than others), I confess that I have small hope of him who repeats the same mistake again and again. If he is unable to learn by Consequences he is unable to profit by the greatest teacher Nature has given him; and in nine cases out of ten the reason that he cannot, or will not, do so is that, instead of looking to himself for his failure, he lays the blame on fate or luck, grows reckless, and ceases all attempt at self-control or self-improvement.

I have said that the best use a man can make of his mistakes is to avoid repeating them in the future. It seems to me that the worst use is to brood over them till he becomes melancholy, or grows bitter at

their natural consequences. If a mistake is reparable, let him never cease his efforts till he has repaired it. If, as is too often the case, it is incurable, let him bear the consequences manfully and cheerfully, devoting no more time or thought to his mistake than is necessary to help him from falling into it a second time—

“But past who can recall or done undo,
Not God omnipotent, nor Fate,”

says Milton in *Paradise Lost*, and Shakspeare has told us that—

“To mourn a mischief that is past and gone
Is the next way to draw new mischief on.”

Nature has her moral as well as her physical hypochondriacs; and to brood too much over our mistakes is as bad for the healthfulness of the mind as brooding over our ailments is for the healthfulness of the body. Nay, even when our misfortunes seem to come from no fault of our own; when, so far as we can learn from rigid self-examination, we need not reproach ourselves with any consciousness of mistake; when it seems as if circumstances were really too strong for us; even then, if our misfortunes are past cure and inevitable, let us not add to our misery by vain regrets. If we cannot alter our fate, let us alter ourselves. As the well-known Spanish proverb says, “If we cannot get what we like, let us try to like what we can get.” A great authority has told us that “He that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast.” Cheerfulness, like other qualities, has the faculty of growing by what it feeds on.

Doubtless this power of gratefully accepting what there is of good in our lot, instead of brooding over the bad, comes more easily to some than to others. Some are naturally of the sanguine temperament, others of the melancholy. Yet, if we only begin young enough, I think much may be done by ourselves to enable us to acquire a habit of looking at the bright side of life, even by those who are by nature gloomy or morose. "For use can almost change the stamp of nature." If we will resolutely set our minds to remember how much there is of good in our lives, instead of repining at the bad; if we will think more of what we have than of what we have not; of what we have gained rather than what we have lost; of the love and affection of those to whom we are dear rather than of the hatred and malice of those to whom we are anything but dear; we shall have gone a long way towards acquiring that habit of cheerfulness, without which there can be little true growth. For cheerfulness is a sort of moral sunshine, acting upon the character as sunlight upon a flower: *it helps it to expand*. Nor must we despise as an aid to this habit of cheerfulness that love of innocent fun and frolic that seems almost inseparable from healthy young life. "There is a wisdom that looks grave and sneers at merriment," says the American novelist Hawthorne, "and again a deeper wisdom that stoops to be gay as often as occasion serves, and oftentimes avails itself of shallow and trifling grounds of mirth; because if we wait for more substantial ones, we can seldom be gay at all.

Should there be some among my readers who may be doubting whether this habit of cheerfulness may not detract from earnestness and true depth of character, let me support what I have said by extracts from two writers, neither of whom, I think, could be accused of undue levity. The first is from the great Dutch philosopher of the seventeenth century, Spinoza, who in the Forty-second Proposition of the Fourth Part of his *Ethics*, says: "Cheerfulness, contentment (*hilaritas*), can have nothing of excess about it, but is always good; melancholy, discontent (*melancholia*), on the other hand, is always evil." And in his Second Scholium to the Forty-fifth Proposition, "Hatred can never be good," he explains himself thus: "I acknowledge a great difference between mockery, which I have just characterised as bad, and laughter or jest. For laughter and jest also are a kind of gladness; and so, if they have nothing of excess about them, are good. . . . Why should it be held more seemly to satisfy the cravings of hunger and thirst than to drive away melancholy? . . . To use the good things of life, therefore, and to enjoy ourselves in so far as this may be done short of satiety and disgust—for here excess were not enjoyment—is true wisdom."

And Herbert Spencer, the philosopher of our own century, seeking to impress upon his readers the importance of paying a due regard to health, because (among other reasons) of the good spirits that so often accompany good health, writes thus*:—"In estimating conduct we must remember that there are those who

* *Data of Ethics*, pp. 193, 194.

by their joyousness beget joy in others, and that there are those who by their melancholy cast a gloom on every circle they enter. And we must remember that by display of overflowing happiness a man of the one kind may add to the happiness of others more than by positive efforts to benefit them; and that a man of the other kind may decrease their happiness more by his presence than he increases it by his actions. Full of vivacity, the one is ever welcome. For his wife he has smiles and jocose speeches; for his children stores of fun and play; and for his friends pleasant talk interspersed with the sallies of wit that come from buoyancy. Contrariwise the other is shunned. The irritability resulting now from ailments, now from failures caused by feebleness, his family has daily to bear. Lacking adequate energy for joining in them, he has at best but a tepid interest in the amusements of his children; and he is called a wet blanket by his friends. Little account as our ethical reasonings take note of it, yet is the fact obvious that since happiness and misery are infectious, such regard for self as conduces to health and high spirits is a benefaction to others, and such disregard of self as brings on suffering, bodily or mental, is a malefaction to others."

Possibly some of my readers may remember an article that appeared a short while ago in the *Nineteenth Century*, called, I think, "Microbes and Sunlight," in which the writer impressed upon his readers the necessity of admitting ample sunlight through the windows; since the microbes or germs of many fevers and other diseases were destroyed by coming into

contact with certain rays of the sun. It seems to me that there are certain low forms of moral disease, such as envy, spite, hatred, that become torpid, even if they do not actually die, in an atmosphere of habitual cheerfulness ; while they flourish most abundantly in gloom and discontent, which act upon the moral nature as blight and fog upon animal and vegetable life, arresting all healthy growth, promoting only that which is pernicious and unwholesome.

On Water and its Diverse Forms.

A FEW days of my summer holidays this year have been spent at Grindelwald, in the lovely region of the Bernese Oberland Alps. It lies between three and four thousand feet above the level of the sea; and, thanks to that marvellous product of modern engineering, the little mountain railway, a still further distance of many hundreds of feet up precipitous mountains can be traversed in a brief space of time. Twice I availed myself of this mode of transit. The first expedition was to Little Scheidegg, the second to Murren, and on each occasion found a village with one or more thriving hotels built on the mountain heights. The journey to Scheidegg is less abrupt and precipitous than to Murren, the little railway winding its way so gradually that one hardly realizes the distance to which one is being carried. Unfortunately the day chosen for the expedition was somewhat rainy, and we rested some minutes in the station waiting-room, hoping that the weather might clear, while a short address was given on the nature of Glaciers. Our hopes frustrated, it was proposed that we should brave the rain and wend our way still higher. We had walked about half an hour when our path became narrow and rather precipitous. Unfortunately for my full enjoyment of

mountain scenery I cannot look down even a slight precipice without experiencing a feeling of almost uncontrollable giddiness; and, fearing that I might become a clog upon my friends, I said I would rest where I was till their return.

Perhaps it was the short address upon Glaciers that may have directed my thoughts into the channel; but I was no sooner left alone than I found my mind occupied not so much with the grandeur of the scenery—for the mist was growing denser and fast obscuring all view—as with the strangely diverse forms Water is able to assume. Was it possible that the water of the peaceful lakes I had so lately traversed, almost colourless in itself, though reflecting every hue of the sky, and apparently impervious to all compression, could be one and the same substance as the waterfall with its silvery spray and dashing foam, as the brilliantly white snow, soft and yielding to the slightest pressure, or as the hard transparent solid ice? Was this dense, unlovely mist, that was obscuring the distant scene, but another mode of this multiform creature, Water? Somewhat fancifully I found myself picturing the arrival of an inhabitant from some region where water was known only in its simple form; and while showing to him the lakes and waterfalls, the snow and ice, telling him that they were all but different forms of the same substance, Water. I imagined him gazing half in admiration, half in incredulity; and while so gazing, as if in rebuke, this mysterious Water suddenly transformed itself into dense mist, effectually shutting out from the bewildered beholder all its more beautiful

forms. With many myths or allegorical explanations of physical facts I was already familiar. Had any myth arisen, unknown to me, in the childhood either of India or Greece, displaying a recognition of this strange power Water has to assume such diverse forms?

I was roused from my idle musings by such an increase in the mist that I thought it wiser not to linger longer, but to retrace my steps as quickly as I could to the station while my path was still visible. While wending my way I found myself resolving that, on my return to England, I would acquaint myself more fully with the scientific interpretation of the diverse forms of Water. In a vague way I had a certain acquaintance with the general facts; but an unintelligent acquiescence in information upon subjects that have never pressed strongly for interpretation, affords a much less solid basis for knowledge than those convictions that have been arrived at after careful investigation into causes upon which one has been keenly interested. The book, among others, that I have found most serviceable to me is the first volume of the International Scientific Series, called *Forms of Water: in Clouds and Rivers, Ice and Glaciers*, by Professor Tyndall.* The volume is an expansion of Lectures delivered at the Royal Institution before a young audience. The style, therefore, is luminous and simple, while each assertion is supported by proof in the shape of diagrams or illustrations—in the Lectures themselves by actual experiment.

* Many of the essays in Professor TYNDALL's *Fragments of Science* and *New Fragments* have been of great service to me also.

Before proceeding to discuss the phenomena of snow and ice, it may be well to recall to the reader a few facts concerning the nature of Matter, and the wonderful forces whereby it is affected. What is Water? What is Air? What is Fire? There are probably few in these days who are not aware that water is not an elementary substance, as it used to be considered, but a combination of two gases that in certain definite proportion have an "affinity" or powerful attraction for each other (every gas consisting of an enormous number of independent particles). These two gases are Oxygen and Hydrogen. When eight parts of oxygen unite with one part of hydrogen they are always transformed into water, and they can be resolved back into their original forms by passing an electric spark through the water. The literal interpretation of the Greek word "hydrogen" is, that which generates or produces water; for it has been found that notwithstanding the minute quantity of hydrogen in comparison with oxygen in the composition of water, oxygen has no power of itself to become water. It must be united with hydrogen in the exact proportion—neither more nor less—of eight parts to one. In like manner air has been proved to be no element, but to consist of four parts of nitrogen gas to one of oxygen, with a trace of carbonic acid. But what is Fire or Heat? This is a much more complex question, and one about which there has been much more conflict of opinion than upon water or air; yet a comprehension of which is absolutely necessary for the purposes of this little paper. Modern science

is becoming tolerably convinced that not only is Heat not an elementary substance; it is not even a combination of gases. It is not an "entity" at all; it is a "quality" or mode of motion. Certain it is that there is no motion or friction without the development of heat. Every time a frolicsome schoolboy performs the well-known trick of rubbing a brass button violently and then pressing the heated substance on the forehead of a schoolfellow, there is conscious or unconscious recognition of the fact that violent motion is always accompanied by corresponding violent heat. Every time we watch a railway servant greasing the wheels of a train, we may learn that the officials are so thoroughly aware of the tendency motion has to generate heat that they hold it necessary to use precaution that the train be not set on fire from the heat developed by its own rapid motion. It may, of course, be objected that, though there is no motion without heat, yet, for all that, heat may be a "substance" which requires motion for its development, instead of only a "quality" pertaining to motion. There are other reasons, however, for believing heat to be a "quality" rather than a "substance." All matter, so far as we know it, carries weight with it. Even air, light as it is, carries a small portion of weight; but heated substances have been weighed over and over again, and have been found to weigh neither more nor less than when they are cold. Again, heat so far has defied all attempts to break it up into constituent parts; so that modern physicists are becoming pretty well convinced that Heat bears a greater analogy

to Light and Sound than to Air and Water. For light and sound, too, consist of vibrations, and, it is believed, are modes of motion. Heat, then, is defined by modern science as Energy rather than Substance.

But, seeing the immense distance that there is between the sun and our globe, how is it that we are able to receive light and heat from it at all? For some years past physicists have assumed there to be a jelly-like substance, which they have called Ether, pervading space throughout the entire universe, and capable of being affected by light and heat from the sun very much as the ocean is affected by wind; that is to say, waves of motion are set up, and through this medium the sun's light and heat are transmitted to our earth. The proofs given for this assumption are very strong, though I have not space to enter upon them here. What I want chiefly to lay stress upon is that the waves of light and heat are not different forms of the same waves, but are quite distinct. They not only affect us differently, but have different parts to perform in Nature. Roughly speaking we cannot *see* heat and we cannot *feel* light.* Moreover, light

* I say "roughly speaking," because we all know that heat can be artificially increased till it becomes visible or "incandescent." Long after a heated iron has become too hot for it to be touched, its heat, great as it is, is still invisible. Yet, in process of time, it will become "red hot," and later on "white hot." In like manner I have heard it said that Light can be *felt* by the blind, in whom the sense of touch is often abnormally developed. How far this perception of Light may be dependent upon touch or upon the vision not being totally destroyed is, I think, capable of discussion. For all practical purposes it is quite within scientific accuracy to say we cannot see solar heat and we cannot feel solar light.

affects the air much more strongly than other material substances; while the waves of heat have little power upon the air. On a cold and frosty day in January the air is often brilliant from the waves of light sent out by the sun, while on an intensely sultry oppressive day in August the atmosphere is cheerless and gloomy from the little light received.

"But," I can imagine some reader saying, "if the hot rays of the sun have so little power over the air, how is it that our sensations constantly seem to prove to us that the air is hotter at one time than another?" Undoubtedly the air is capable of receiving heat almost to any extent; but the heat it receives from the sun is indirect, and is imparted to it by objects that have been already penetrated by the heat-waves of the sun. At noon on a hot summer's day, when the sun is at its height, if we put our hands on the sand of a sea beach, we shall find that the sand has become so hot, through its power of absorbing the heat-rays of the sun, that it is as much as we can do to keep our hands upon it. This heat the sand imparts to the air surrounding. If we now remove our hands from the sand and plunge them into the sea, we shall find that the surface of the sea, though not nearly so hot as the sand, is yet quite lukewarm, showing that it, too, can be penetrated by the hot rays of the sun, though not to the same extent as the sand. The sea, too, imparts its heat to the surrounding air. Thus warmed by sea and land, what happens to the air? When heated, air expands and also becomes lighter. Water also expands and grows lighter as it

becomes hotter, and, in addition, sends out invisible aqueous vapour which, being lighter than air, helps the latter to rise still further. We are now in a position to understand how clouds are formed. The hot rays of the sun, acting upon both land and water, communicate indirectly their heat to the air, and enable it to take up the aqueous vapour from the surface of the sea. But as the air ascends higher, as it grows gradually beyond the reach of the heated surfaces of land and sea, it gradually also grows cooler, since it has little power to absorb into itself the direct hot rays of the sun. Moreover, by the very fact of rising into higher altitudes, the air has grown cooler since it has to bear less pressure from the atmosphere. Meanwhile, the sun is still continuing to throw out its rays of heat, which enable the aqueous vapours to be drawn from the sea into the air. The warm, damp air as it ascends meets the cooler air. Part of the invisible vapour condenses into cloud, and will fall in the form of rain upon the hills; the remainder of the vapour will be carried by the air into still higher regions and will be precipitated in the form of snow, a portion of which will be subsequently melted by the hot rays of the sun into rain. A large proportion of this melted snow and rain rush down the sides of the mountains and hills, and form those exquisite little streamlets so familiar to the dwellers among mountain scenery. These streamlets feed the larger streams and rivulets, which again flow into the broad rivers which bear them rapidly away into the sea from whence they

arose. That smaller proportion of the rain which is not precipitated down the sides of the mountains is received by the soil of the hills, percolates into the mountain springs, or if the day be hot, is drawn up again by the rays of the sun, forming the dense, unlovely mist so unwelcome to mountaineers. But this mist itself is of the nature of very fine rain, and so, when dispersed into space by a drying wind, will feed the springs and streams, and find its way back into its ocean home after its long and diverse travels.

During my mountain musings there had been one other problem upon water that had pressed upon me for interpretation—the *whiteness and softness of snow*. How is it that while frozen water in the form of ice is as colourless and transparent as unfrozen water, under its frozen form of snow it should be opaque and of dazzling whiteness? Snow is not frozen *rain* like hail, but frozen *vapour*. The particles of moisture are less closely locked together than in ice, so that air is able to rush in. It is a law, seemingly universal, that where air is able to mix freely with any transparent substance whiteness ensues. Alike in the foam of the cataract, in the spray of the waterfall, in the “cream” on sparkling wine, whiteness is the result of air mixing with a transparent liquid. The subject is of such extreme interest and beauty that I regret I cannot devote more space to it. Photographs have been taken of snowflakes, which Professor Tyndall has reproduced in his *Forms of Water*. A snowflake is in reality

a product of crystallization, whereby particles of water are able to build themselves into those exquisite gems we know all crystals to be. Snow-flakes differ considerably both in size and form; but there is this peculiarity about them. They always have six points or rays—never more, never less. The atoms and molecules of all substances have this power to build themselves into these beautiful crystals, if not locked too tightly together by cohesive force; for crystallization is only a form of that mysterious power throughout Nature, *magnetism*. We all know gravitation to consist of the attraction every particle of matter has for other particles; but in magnetism there is a repelling force as well as an attractive force. Every particle of magnetic matter is attracted to particles differing from itself, and is repelled by particles similar to itself—*i.e.*, like attracts unlike, and repels like. The beautiful forms crystals are able to assume entirely depend upon these two opposed forces of Nature—Attraction and Repulsion.

But now how shall we account for those pendant forms of beauty—icicles—whereby, when they occur in any quantities, winter scenery is rendered almost more beautiful than summer scenery? If we wanted any additional proof that air is not able to absorb the heat-rays of the sun, the existence of the icicle affords that proof. Snow, like other material substances, has power to absorb the hot rays of the sun; but, owing to its whiteness, somewhat slowly. Heat sufficient to melt the surface of the snow is not enough to be imparted from the snow to the surrounding air.

What happens? As a drop of the melted snow trickles into the cold surrounding air it is frozen before it has time to travel to the warmer regions. Drop after drop of melted snow will follow with the same result. Meanwhile the light-waves of the sun may be taken up by the clear, cold air, shine on the snow and icicles, making the scene one of entrancing brilliancy; yet the light is absolutely powerless to unlock the frozen molecules of water.

Glaciers are simply rivers of ice. They are formed of the snow upon the mountains that has been firmly pressed downwards by the fall of additional snow, and lending itself easily to compression, as all snow does, becomes converted into ice. A large portion of the air being pressed out of it, the snow becomes quite solid like ice; but that even under pressure the ice forming the glacier has a certain portion of air remaining in it, is shown by its colour. The ice of a glacier is not colourless and transparent like the ice of frozen water, but retains to a certain extent the whiteness of frozen vapour. Quite recently it has been proved that glaciers have motion, and that, as with rivers, the centre moves more rapidly than the sides. "Thus," says Professor Tyndall, "without solar fire we could have no atmospheric vapour, without vapour no clouds, without clouds no snow, and without snow no glaciers. Curious, then, as the conclusion may be, the cold ice of the Alps has its origin in the heat of the sun."

Some 2000 years ago there lived a Greek philosopher called Empedocles, who, like so many of us in these

days, became inspired with a longing to penetrate beneath the appearances of things and learn their causes. Looking around him, and seeing how, throughout human and animal life, population was kept up by the "attraction" one sex has for the other; seeing also how population was kept within certain limits by the rivalries and "repulsions" individuals have, not only with fellows of the same species, but that one species has with another; perceiving also how national feuds and internecine wars were the result of human likes and dislikes, he came to the conclusion that the two great principles or powers working throughout the universe were Love and Hate. Living in a prescientific age, and couching his theories in somewhat fanciful phraseology, he was accused of magic in his own generation and made little mark upon succeeding generations.* Yet could he revisit the earth in this latter half of the nineteenth century he would find his theories not only confirmed by modern science, but supported to an extent probably never imagined by himself. He would find that then as now not only are numbers kept up by the attraction one sex has for the other, but that a large proportion of the beauty of the animal kingdom—the plumage of birds, the rich colouring of many insects, the size and strength of many quadrupeds—are to be traced, according to Darwin, to the "attractions" that cause the brilliantly coloured to be preferred before the less favoured, or to the "repulsions" that cause the weaker to fall before

* There is a fine poem called *Empedocles on Etna*, by the late Matthew Arnold.

the stronger in the fight. He would find now as then dynasties overturned by national rivalries. He would find that in this complex civilization of ours three-fourths of its literature—its novels, dramas, poems—are occupied with those loves and hatreds that still form such powerful factors in human action. But he would find far more than this. He would find that even in the inorganic or so-called inanimate world these strange forces of Attraction and Repulsion play the same supreme part. There is not a drop of water in our oceans that does not owe its existence to the "attraction" certain definite portions of oxygen have for hydrogen, which compel them to rush together and be locked in closest union. The very air we breathe depends upon the "attraction" there is between nitrogen and oxygen. The revolution of the moon around our globe, or of the earth around the sun, all depend upon the "attraction" every particle of matter has for other particles—*i.e.*, upon gravitation. And like as much of the beauty of the animal kingdom depends upon the fierce as well as gentler qualities, so in like manner much of the beauty of the inorganic world depends upon the repelling as well as the attracting forces of Nature. There is not a crystal, from a flake of snow to a diamond, that does not owe its form to the combined forces of Attraction and Repulsion.

There are certain natures—popularly, though I think not necessarily, identified with the poetic and artistic—which, while capable of feeling keen delight in the beauty of the universe, have no longing to

penetrate into the causes that make up the beauty; sometimes, indeed, expressing a distaste for such knowledge, as if it were an insult or sacrilege to the loveliness that is all-sufficient for them. There are other natures which, while sharing almost equally with the poet and artist the appreciation of beauty, yet cannot rest content with it, but long to penetrate deeper. It is for such of my readers as share with me this desire to understand the causes at work in Nature that this little paper is written. Not, indeed, for the amount of information it contains—for, from my limited space, this must necessarily be small, but to assist them in carrying the investigation further for themselves. They need not feel, I think, that their enjoyment of natural beauty will suffer in the process. Rather, they will find that a fuller comprehension will bring with it the reward of a keener appreciation.

*On Adequate Knowledge of Ourselves
and Others.*

AMONG the many curiosities that have gathered around literature, there are few things more curious than the diversity of opinions—sometimes entirely contradictory one with the other—which have arisen concerning the characters and actions of historical personages or of distinguished persons still living among ourselves. Doubtless this diversity may sometimes be traced to the political or theological bias of the critic; sometimes to the envy or malignancy of such small minds as delight in the denigration of those whom they feel to be greater than themselves. As Carlyle says in his *Frederick the Great*, “Alas! go where you will, especially in these irreverent ages, the noteworthy Dead is sure to be found lying under infinite dung; no end of calumnies and stupidities accumulated upon him.” Or again, there may be an appreciation quite as excessive and unsupported by facts as the depreciation, and which I think is generally to be traced to that strange mythopœic faculty existing in greater or less degree in most nations; whereby those who have been persecuted by their own generation are transformed into gods, or saints, or

heroes—according as the spirit of the age shall dictate—by the generations that come after. So that the careful student, honestly anxious to attain an accurate acquaintance with such of his fellow-creatures as interest him, feels a certain bewilderment as to what he is to reject or accept among the multiplicity of contradictory opinions that meet his view: unless indeed he become entirely sceptical concerning the trustworthiness of human testimony. Shall he then, in such case, discard the evidence of others altogether, and proceed whenever possible to investigate the subject for himself, even though he may feel it to be presumptuous in him to think that he will succeed where so many have failed? Will he gain more, for instance, from an autobiography than a biography, even by a competent or honest writer? Or can he be quite certain that the autobiography may not have been interspersed with the interpolations of some editor over-fond of embellishing?

I conceive that it is always better for a student to gain knowledge at first hand whenever possible, in order to discover, not what the subject of his research is *reported* to have said or done, but what he has *really* said or done; and that therefore autobiographies and original letters and manuscripts, though by no means infallible guides, are yet likely to be less fallible than biographies and second-hand copies of manuscripts. For if it is very difficult, as it undoubtedly is, for a man to know himself, I think it is far more difficult for others to know him, or, *mutatis mutandis*, for him to know others. The lesson to be learnt from seeing

ourselves as others see us is not quite so simple as Burns imagined: for we should see ourselves in such a diversity of forms, according to the point of view of the beholder, that we should be bewildered which shade of resemblance to accept or of distorted non-resemblance to reject.

And yet if we would gain adequate knowledge either of ourselves or of others it is wiser, I think, not entirely to discard the assistance offered by the criticism of others, especially of contemporaries and personal acquaintances. "When the world blames and slanders us," says the late Cardinal Newman (a victim to much abuse and misconception in his own career), "our business is not to be vexed at it, but rather to consider whether there is any foundation for it, any truth at bottom, though there be exaggeration and mistake. I conceive a person may always gain good for his own soul, gain instruction and useful suggestion by the mistakes of the world about him."

The accusation that Cardinal Newman had most difficulty in rebutting, and which evidently caused him extreme pain, was that of disingenuousness, in that while he was openly preaching against the Church of Rome, his subsequent career showed that he must already have been contemplating seceding to it. Again and again he repudiated the imputation; and posterity, I think, has, to a large extent, accepted his repudiation. Yet it remains none the less true that his contemporaries were correct in their prophesy concerning his future conduct.

It seems to me that while undoubtedly each indi-

vidual knows more of his matured emotions and motives than can possibly be known by his comrades, since

“Not even the tenderest heart, and next our own,
Knows half the reason why we smile and sigh,”

yet these motives and emotions have to attain a certain stage of development, have to become used to their habitat, so to speak, before their possessor becomes conscious of their existence. They are in possession of him rather than he in possession of them; and thus has arisen the saying which, I think, contains a large ingredient of truth, that the looker-on at a game often sees more of it, is a better judge of its probable success or failure than the players themselves. Consider, for instance, how little each individual knows of that powerful index to his emotions—his own Countenance—in comparison with what his friends or even acquaintances know of it? He seldom looks into a glass save for the purposes of the toilet, and goes away almost forgetting what manner of man he is; he has rarely if ever seen himself under the influence of strong emotions, knows but little how he looks when he is moved by tenderness, or stirred by wrath, when he is sparkling with merriment or absorbed in thought. And thus I think it quite probable that when Dr. Newman was honestly arguing against the tenets of the Church of Rome, some gleam in his eye, some quivering of the lips, some vibration in his voice, may have betrayed to his listeners that the interest which had as yet chiefly impelled him to argue against them was already developing into a passion, soon to

grow beyond his power of control; and that he was destined to accept with his whole heart and soul the very tenets he was then contravening. Possibly, indeed, the warmth and earnestness with which he at first rejected them may have aided him in his subsequent acceptance; since, as Novalis has told us, "To become properly acquainted with a truth we must first have disbelieved it and argued against it."

In one of his lesser poems, called *The Victim*, Tennyson has finely shown how difficult it is for a man in some cases even to understand the nature of his own affections or preferences till they suddenly reveal themselves to him under the stress of some great terror or temptation.

The scene is laid among the worshippers of Odin, in whose mythology, as in other mythologies, there existed the strange and terrible belief that the wrath of the gods could not be appeased save by the sacrifice of some perfectly innocent victim. The country is represented as devastated by plague and famine, so that the people cried, "The gods are moved against the land."

The priests in terror turn to their oracle to inquire how best the gods may be appeased. At last the answer comes:—

"The King is happy
In child and wife:
Take you his dearest—
Give us a life."

The priests immediately seek for the king in order to learn from him which he holds dearest, the child or the wife. On their arrival at his dwelling they find

the king away in the hunting field ; but the queen is with her child, caressing him. Nothing is said of any beauty or charm pertaining to the queen ; but the child—an only son—is described as of eight summers old, and of great beauty and promise.

“The Priest beheld him,
And cried with joy :
‘The gods have answered,
We give them the boy.’”

On his return from the hunting field, the king is informed of what has taken place during his absence, and is entreated by his wife to say which he holds dearest, herself or their child. Entirely submissive to the will of the gods, fully believing that if he does not decide truly, not only will his country continue to be cursed with plague and famine, but—since the gods will be satisfied with none but his dearest—there will be entailed the sacrifice of two victims instead of one : yet, endeavour as he may, he cannot decide which is the dearer, the wife or their child.

“Yet both are near, and both are dear,
And which the dearest I cannot tell.”

Still, since the priests have selected the child, he judges that they must have surely acted under the guidance of the gods, and in their decision finally he acquiesces.

The rites, therefore, are prepared and the child stripped ; but just as the knife is made ready for the innocent little victim, the mother in her agony throws herself between. Instantly and instinctively, before

reason or self-control have power to assert themselves, the king, uttering a cry, attempts to snatch his wife from the danger, while she, exclaiming "I am his dearest, I," rushes on the knife. The priest, perceiving his former error, cries with joy and exultation—

"O, Father Odin,
We give you a life,
Which was his nearest?
Which was his dearest?
The gods have answered;
We give them the wife!"

It was not until it was revealed to him by his own instinctive action that the king became aware of his own preference. Yet in all probability, had he consulted such of his own more intimate friends and relatives as had seen him frequently in the company of his wife and child, they could have told him that dearly as he loved the son, the wife was dearer still.

But how shall we account for the diversity and complexity of opposed views concerning the character of ourselves and others that have arisen, whereby the same individual is represented as possessing qualities apparently quite irreconcilable one with the other? No doubt we must make a certain allowance for the personal equation of the critic. If he be obviously stirred by political or theological animus; or if, being in the position of a rival he is under the influence of unworthy jealousy, it seems wiser to regard such criticism as worthless; and since, at best, it can but give a distorted view, not to waste our time over it. But if the critic appear free from all unworthy feeling,

if it seem likely that he is among those who "will nothing extenuate nor aught set down in malice," then, I think, if we would really attain something like adequate knowledge of the character under investigation we must not altogether discard the point of view of the detractor, though we shall probably learn far more from that of the admirer, since very few can reveal themselves so fully to those who dislike them as to those who appreciate them. As Nathaniel Hawthorne has well said, "Thoughts are frozen and utterance benumbed unless the speaker stand in some true relationship to his audience." And of all relationships there is none so magnetic and irresistible in its influence as that of Sympathy. Yet this sympathy need not narrow itself to mere acquiescence or parrot-like imitation the one of the other. Where there is mutual interest in the same subjects there is often an added zest by the presentation of opposed views; nor—where each disputer is anxious for the attainment of truth rather than of victory—need any breach of friendship be apprehended through the conflict.

It seems to me, therefore, that in historical research the student should devote his first and chiefest energies to the investigation of original matter, to letters, and, wherever possible, to all manuscripts approaching the nature of an autobiography; and he must do his utmost to satisfy himself that there have been no fraudulent additions or erasures, a task in itself of extreme difficulty, requiring both acuteness and patience.*

* In his *Curiosities of Literature* ISAAC DISRAELI has devoted much attention to Literary Forgeries, Suppression of Manuscripts, and kindred subjects.

But he must not be content with this. To possess a full comprehension of his subject he must seek to discover how he was estimated by his contemporaries—alike by those who approved of him and by those who disapproved. Most persons of strong individuality have enemies as well as friends; and the few who are in what we have been told to consider the dangerous state of being spoken well of by all men, are generally amiable but neutral—sometimes shallow, too often time-servers. Nor must we leap to the conclusion that when the same individual is represented by two different critics as possessing qualities absolutely inconsistent and irreconcilable one with the other, that the critic is necessarily dishonest, or that the subject of his criticism is double-minded.

"Inconsistencies," Dr. Johnson, in his once famous romance of "Rasselas," makes Imlac, 'the guide, philosopher and friend' in the story, say, "cannot both be right, but imputed to man they may both be true." Say, for instance, that one critic describes a man as cautious and reserved, and he is described by another as frank and genial, are we to infer from this that the critics are untrustworthy; or are we to infer that the subject of the criticism is not altogether free from duplicity? Should we not rather draw the conclusion, that however frank and genial he may appear to his friends, the statement of his enemies has shown that his geniality is tempered by discretion; that he is not what George Eliot has somewhat caustically called "a leaky fool"; but that however unreserved he may be by nature, he will not bestow his confidences upon

all alike, but will wait till he has some reason to believe that the recipient is worthy of them, or at lowest, will not betray them? Piecing in this way the criticisms of friendly and unfriendly contemporaries, the careful student may gain an approximately correct knowledge of the subject of his investigation. And yet, when he has spent months, or perhaps years, in the search, the student of human nature, like other students, will arise from his studies with an oppressive consciousness of his own ignorance; he will feel more deeply than when he set out upon his search how far removed is his approximate knowledge from knowledge that is exact and absolute. And, perhaps, the truest lesson that his investigation will have taught will be that since he has such difficulty in arriving at a true estimate of a character to which he has devoted long and impartial study, how cautious and tender should he be in arriving at a definite judgment of those of whom he knows but little.

*On the Progress of Liberty of Thought
during the last Sixty Years.*

IN view of the rejoicings that we have so lately held in connection with the present Queen's reign, it has seemed to me that a few pages recalling, though necessarily very briefly, the progress of Liberty of Thought that has taken place during the last sixty years may be considered not inappropriate by my readers. For, immense boon as is the increase in material welfare, immense boon as is the growth of the kindly humanitarian spirit so peculiarly the product of this century, I doubt whether either boon is greater than that growth of freedom of thought whereby we have been enabled to quit the clogs of bigotry and falsehood; so that a man is no longer compelled to pollute his soul by saying he believes that which is essentially incredible, in order to protect himself and his family from the stigma of social ostracism. Doubtless the growth in freedom of thought and the advance in material welfare have proceeded side by side with each other in more or less orderly sequence, each acting and reacting on the other. The cheaper dissemination of literature, whereby we have been enabled to acquire familiarity with thoughts of the best minds of both past and present times; the establishment of easy

methods of locomotion, such as railways, whereby we are brought into personal relationship with different nationalities and different creeds; almost inevitably bring about a wider, more tolerant outlook, and weaken our former certainty that the English Protestant Church of the last few centuries is absolutely right, the religious denominations of all other nations and all other ages absolutely wrong. Almost imperceptibly greater knowledge leads to greater humility and wider charity; we begin to suspect that other religions may contain something worthy to be learnt as well as ours, and that it is possible even our own may not have wholly escaped the contaminations of error. And this wider outlook and broader religious charity react upon our pursuit after material welfare, and make what was formerly a dangerous and difficult warfare an easy and interesting study.

In an article entitled "Lights of the Church and Science," Huxley states that, when he was a young man, "geologists and biologists could hardly follow to the end any path of inquiry without finding the way blocked by Noah and his ark, or by the first chapter of Genesis; and it was a serious matter, in this country at any rate, for a man to be suspected of doubting the literal truth of the Diluvial or any other Pentateuchal history." Whereas "at the present time it is difficult to persuade serious scientific inquirers to occupy themselves in any way with the Noachian Deluge. They look at you with a smile and a shrug, and say they have more important matters to attend to than mere antiquarianism."

From the sixteenth century, or perhaps even earlier, this combined advance of the apostles of liberty of thought and of the pursuit of science have, with few exceptions, laboured and suffered together. The martyrs of the one cause have but too frequently been martyrs to the other. The great names, such as Bruno, Galileo, etc., so familiar to us all, sowed seeds imperishable, almost beyond human gratitude; but yet, the soil being so unsuitable, the sowers themselves so far in advance of their time, the seed lay upon too stony a ground to receive full development. In saying this I do not wish to detract from the service rendered by these martyrs to truth and science. As Lowell says:—

“Oh, small beginnings, ye are great and strong,
Based on a faithful heart and weariless brain!
Ye build the future fair, ye conquer wrong;
Ye earn the crown, and wear it not in vain.”

Or, again, as he writes elsewhere:—

“Thoughts that great hearts once broke for, we
Breathe cheaply in the common air:
The dust we trample heedlessly
Throbbled once in saints and heroes rare,
Who perished, opening for the race
New pathways to the commonplace!”

Yet we must not disguise from ourselves the fact that the great advance in liberty of thought during the past sixty years argues an exceeding richness and preparedness of soil. And one among many factors causing the soil to be in readiness is that, in addition to the discoveries of science, in addition to the destructive

Biblical criticism of those outside the pale of the State Church, she suffered an attack from some of the more earnest members belonging to her own body.

Paradoxical as it may sound, I am inclined to think that the freedom of thought sown in the sixteenth century, and so fast developing within recent memory, received a small but not unimportant quota of stimulating, heat-giving manure from the Tractarian movement of 1833, four years before the present Queen's accession; this movement bearing somewhat the same relationship to the earlier half of the religious life of this century as the Wesleyan or Methodist movement bore to the earlier half of the last century. It awoke men from lifeless, spiritless routine; it aroused them from mere sleepy acquiescence in the worship of the letter, inspiring them with fervid, eager enthusiasm of the spirit; and, however we may regret its contamination with the puerilities of form and ritual, it is, I think, impossible impartially to study this Tractarian, or Oxford movement, as it is sometimes called, without recognizing that its inspirers—Newman, Pusey, Keble—were men of extreme earnestness of spirit; and that, formalists though some of their successors grew to be, yet they themselves fully perceived that the life is more than meat, and the body than raiment; and showed, if not always by their preaching, at least by their example, that the realization of a high, pure, and unselfish ideal in their daily lives was of far greater importance than parrot-like, unreal acceptance of lifeless creeds. Yet the stimulation was indirect—almost reactionary, rather than direct.

Earnestness is diffusive, and, when once excited, often appears under a variety of forms. Men could be no longer content with sleepy acquiescence in unquestioned dogmas; and thus the Tractarian movement was quickly followed, as by a sort of reaction against the sacerdotalism inherent in it, with earnest and somewhat militant investigation on the part of the more liberal section of the State Church. In 1848 the religious world was startled by what was called the Gorham case, a controversy arising from the refusal of the then Bishop of Exeter to institute the Rev. Mr. Gorham to a living with which he had been presented, owing to the unsoundness of his views concerning any spiritual efficacy to be derived from baptism, especially infant baptism. The Arches Court of Canterbury decided against Mr. Gorham, but the decision was reversed by the Privy Council, and within two years of the Bishop's attack the clergyman found himself in full possession of his living.

In 1860 the once famous volume, *Essays and Reviews*, was published, to be followed by the writings of Dr. Colenso. Both books were condemned by the ecclesiastical authorities, but the judgment of the former was reversed by the Judicial Committee in 1864, the latter being reversed a year later.

I have, in an article in a former number of the *Agnostic Annual*, already expressed my doubts as to the rightfulness of men holding unorthodox views continuing to take money for repeating creeds and dogmas of the Church in which they themselves have ceased to believe. In justice to them we must re-

member that sometimes such conduct arises, not so much from a spirit of time-serving, or even from moral timidity, as from a deficiency in clearness of logical perception. There are many persons, otherwise of great mental ability, who cannot see the full logic of their own admissions. One thing, however, seems to me clear, that, whether it were right or wrong for Dr. Colenso and the clerical writers of the *Essays and Reviews* to continue in the State Church, the higher and purer section of Freethought, gradually growing to assume so important a position in this latter half of the nineteenth century, received a distinct benefit from the mild Rationalism that was the product of the State Church herself. Gardeners tell us that if we wish the seed we sow to bear fruit abundantly and vigorously we should prepare the soil some period in advance, digging, forking, turning it over, in order that the various ingredients of the air may mix freely with the soil.

It seems to me that the attacks of Colenso and the writers of *Essays and Reviews* acted as a veritable hoeing and digging of the soil, rendering it fit and capable for the reception of the more trenchant and convincing arguments so quickly to be sprung upon it. In the first place it accustomed earnest and able religious men to the atmosphere of controversy; for the works under dispute were freely discussed in households where the more logical and far-reaching works of Strauss, John Stuart Mill, etc., would not have been mentioned. In the second place, the fact that these attacks came from men, not only of religious profession,

but of blameless moral lives, served as a preventive of that dread—not wholly unwarranted, as is shown by the lives of some of the French Deists of the last century—that decay in religious belief is almost irrevocably connected with decay in morality of life.

In 1859 was published the *Origin of Species*, and from that time each year has seen increasing strength in the scientific position, increasing weakness in the position of the Church. For, as Huxley has well said, the *Origin of Species* “has worked as complete a revolution in biological science as the *Principia* did in astronomy. Whatever be the ultimate verdict of posterity upon this or that opinion which Mr. Darwin has propounded, whatever adumbrations or anticipation of his doctrines may be found in the writings of his predecessors, the broad fact remains that, since the publication and by reason of the publication of the *Origin of Species*, the fundamental conceptions and the views of the students of living nature have been completely changed. From that work has sprung a great renewal, a true *instauratio magna* of the zoological and botanical sciences.”

That the publication of such a work should have attracted a certain amount of theological animus goes without saying, a certain amount also of scientific and moral repudiation; for, in addition to the doubts upon the accuracy of revelation thrown by the Darwinian theory, in addition to the new light thrown by it upon all questions of biology, it affected also cosmology, and even, to a certain extent, ethics. Seeing how far-reaching and penetrating was the influence

effected by this book, the wonder is, not that the *Origin of Species* excited a certain amount of angry indignation, but that it did not excite more; and that what it succeeded in exciting was comparatively so short-lived. That this argues a certain preparedness of soil I have already endeavoured to show; but I think also another cause may be said to lie in the blameless life of the great philosopher himself. Doubtless, to the scientific mind, the truth or falsehood of a newly-propounded doctrine is not in any way affected by the morality or immorality of its propounder; but with the average British householder there is a deep-rooted, and on the whole a wholesome, aversion to any doctrine that might prove subversive of private or public morality. If it be a question between the intellectual reception of a new scientific doctrine and even the bare possibility of any deterioration of morals arising from such reception, the scientific doctrine at once goes to the wall. But, fierce as was the light that beat upon Darwin after the publication of his book, not the faintest scandal against him seemed able to take root; while the dignified manner with which he treated his critics—the kindly patience with which he would endeavour to make his meaning plain to the ignorant anxious to learn; the readiness with which he would acknowledge any error of detail pointed out to him by those competent to judge; the silent forbearance with which he would pass over such criticisms as were obviously animated by mere rancour—all served to teach the great lesson that it is quite possible to hold unorthodox religious

views and yet be morally blameless both in public and private capacity.

It is not yet forty years since the publication of the *Origin of Species*, but it is hardly too much to say that there is scarcely an educated person among us whose views of theology and life have not been affected by it—not excepting the clergy themselves. They do not yet, it is true, openly acknowledge their defeat, but shelter themselves under a refuge which, as it seems to me, is as unsafe as it is undignified. By a policy of “reconciliation” they so twist the words of the Bible, so strain the original meaning, that such among us as are old enough to remember the theological repudiation of the then new scientific doctrines feel a condition of bewilderment and confusion come over us when brought into contact with young undergraduates and students of theology, and learn from them how not only are they permitted to hold the views of modern science upon cosmogony and biology, but have been sometimes even instructed that the Bible, so far from denying these views, has really been their true propounder! Far honester, far more dignified, as it seems to me, would our clergy be if, with their acceptance of the new science, they occupied themselves with bringing about a widening of their articles of subscription; if they boldly claimed exemption from reading aloud such portions of their creeds as are in direct contradiction to what they know to be the truth. This, however, is a question for them, not us. It is hardly too much to say that every attempted reconciliation they make is a concession to us—a tacit acknowledgment that they

believe us to be in the right, the opinions formerly identified with the Church wrong.

And if it be asked, "Has Science brought us any commensurate benefit for the pain she has caused us in divesting us of our old fondly-prized beliefs?" the answer is that the pain is almost entirely confined to one generation; the freedom from the clogs of bigotry and falsehood benefits all future generations. There is a story told of Galileo that, being hampered in some of his investigations by the received Aristotelian maxim that the heavier of two falling bodies would reach the ground sooner than the lighter, he put it to the proof by direct experiment, and found that, when not unequally retarded by the resistance of the air, heavy and light substances fell through the same height in identically the same time. By this experiment Galileo doubtless gave pain and offence to many of the more devout Aristotelian worshippers of his own generation. But who even among such of us as have a profound reverence for Aristotle would be offended with Galileo now for his courage in venturing to test one of the great master's axioms by direct experiment? In like manner Huxley tells us that there is not a scientific man in these days who allows himself to be hampered in his investigations by the story of Noah's ark. Is it too much to surmise that in the next generation there will be no one, scientific or unscientific, who will feel pain, or even offence, by denial of a story written no one knows by whom, and which probably owes its existence to some traditional inundation or partial flood, not uncommon in the East;

and which, in the course of centuries, has, with natural and quite comprehensible exaggeration, grown into the miraculous tale that forty years ago was thought so wicked to question?

And this brings me to the final part of my paper—viz., the authorship of the Pentateuch itself. If I deal but briefly with this it must be remembered that my space is very limited; and that, while England has been in the van as regards the discovery of the law of Evolution, she has been behind her Continental brethren, especially the Germans, in the exegesis of the Bible. Yet the solid work done here has been a substantial support to the work done by Englishmen.

While English geologists have shown how entirely unsupported by fact is the cosmogony of Genesis; while English thinkers, with that practical good sense so characteristic of them when once they can break through their prejudices, have found themselves wondering what greater demand upon their credulity is made by the acknowledged fables of other religions than by the stories of Eve being made from Adam's rib, of the talking serpent, of Eve's temptation, or of Lot's wife being transformed into a pillar of salt, the Germans have set themselves the task of trying to discover who, after all, is responsible for the authorship of this collection of seeming legends so difficult for thinking persons to accept as truth. They have shown us how very little is known upon the authorship of the various books of the Bible; and that if certain of them, such as Job and the later Prophets, contain much that is imperishable in literature, they do so,

not because they are the work of this or that author, but because, in common with the higher thoughts attributed to Confucius, to Buddha, to Marcus Aurelius, to Spinoza, to Shakspeare, they have an intrinsic excellence of their own. They are good for all time and for all civilizations capable of understanding them, because they appeal to all that is noblest and truest in humanity.

Yes, our sixty years' warfare with superstition and bigotry has done its work; our battle is nearly won; our religious disabilities almost all removed*; and in looking back we can afford to be generous to those that we are conquering. For, after all, are they to be blamed because their fathers preached, as truths to be held at their souls' peril, fictions that now provoke only a smile? Or are those fathers, in their turn, deserving of any reprobation? Who shall trace the origin and full development of Superstition? We only know it to be a blight, from which no nation, no religion, is free; partially stamped out, it is true, from time to time, in each religion, in each nation, by the finer, purer minds anxious to put spirit in place of letter; only to reappear again, spreading its stagnating hand far and wide, checking all healthy growth.

As George Eliot has well said, "If there is an angel who records the sorrows of men as well as their sins, he knows how many and deep are the sorrows that spring from false ideas, for which no man is culpable."

* Tests on admission to Degrees in the Universities were not finally abolished till 1871, while the Abolition of Oaths, brought about by Bradlaugh's famous Affirmation Bill, is quite within recent memory.

Or, as Tennyson has sung:—

“O purbind race of miserable men,
How many among us at this very hour
Do forge a lifelong trouble for ourselves
By taking true for false and false for true.”

As one consequence among many of belief in the truth of Genesis, I may mention the prejudice Sir James Simpson had to overcome before women in childbirth were allowed the alleviation of anæsthetics from the false idea that medical science had no right to interfere in a curse laid by God upon all women because of the backsliding of their common ancestress, Eve.

Yet, in exposing the errors of others, let us be on our guard that we do not ourselves become a prey to the same powerful foe, so ready to assert itself on the faintest opportunity. For there is no doctrine that may not become a superstition if it is accepted unintelligently; if it is received, not because of its own intrinsic merit, but because of the fame of its original propounder. A few centuries ago Aristotelianism had grown into a superstition. It is quite possible that Darwinism may do the same if we accept it unintelligently. Not, indeed, that the ignorant can venture to criticise the discoveries of those great masters who have devoted a lifetime to their investigations. Such shallow criticism we should all feel to be contemptible. But it is that the disciples of a great master shall not exalt him to a position of infallibility he would have been the last to assume himself. If thoroughly competent critics of other nations or subsequent ages

believe that among many undoubted truths for which a great teacher deserves our gratitude there are a few errors into which he has unwittingly misled us, the business of his disciples is to court investigation, rather than to shrink from it. If their master is wrong, it is fitting that his error should be exposed. If, on the other hand, he is right, the correctness of his position will come out all the clearer because of the full light that has been cast upon it.

England in the Declining Years of the Nineteenth Century.

IN spite of the numerous summaries of past events during the present Sovereign's reign—almost wearisome in their repetition—called forth by the Jubilee we have so lately celebrated, there will be, I imagine, in two years' time a new and greatly enlarged retrospect summarising the events of the entire nineteenth century. For after all, the Queen's reign, unusually long though it is, has so far only occupied ten years in excess of one-half of that great century now drawing so rapidly to its close. The end of any period—whether it be the eve of a New Year or the birthday eve of any individual—carries with it a certain solemnity of its own, a solemnity that would be probably more deeply felt were it not weakened by annual repetition. But the close of a Century suffers from no such familiarising process. There is almost certainly no one now living who can recall the close of the eighteenth century. Unless future science greatly increase the duration of life, we may safely prophesy that there is no one now living who will be able to record with intelligent personal recollection any details of the end of this century to those living at the close of the next.

But the end of the nineteenth century has not yet

arrived, and it is with its declining years, not with its death, that this little paper will be chiefly occupied.

And here the first thing to strike us, as it seems to me, is, that notwithstanding the greatness of the nineteenth century—greater certainly than its two immediate predecessors; greater, I think, than even that great sixteenth century, which it more nearly resembles—yet its decline is hardly worthy of its youth or middle age. In poetry, in science, in inventions, in philosophy, in fiction, have we any names among us so great as to be remembered in conjunction with the great men of the youth or middle age of the century? In poetry, with Wordsworth, for instance, with Byron, with Keats, with Shelley, with Coleridge at his best? Have we any who can be named in the same breath with the great poet who occupied so large a portion of the early and late middle life of our century—Alfred Tennyson? Have we any poetess like Elizabeth Barrett Browning?

Look, again, at our great inventions, to which perhaps more than anything else England owes her rapid progress. Both the establishment of railways and the invention of the electric telegraph are largely associated with the great Englishmen Stephenson and Wheatstone; but the more recent inventions of the nineteenth century belong principally to America and Germany. In philosophy and science, again, have we any among us now to compare with the great thinkers of the youth and middle age of our century? Perhaps it would be unfair to single out Charles Darwin, for men of his exceptional order of genius seldom appear

more than one in a century, and he to our century occupies much the same place as Newton did to his. But of the lesser philosophers, have we anyone of maturity or youth among us who can at all compare with John Stuart Mill, whose work lay principally in the earlier half of our century, or with Tyndall and Huxley belonging to its late middle age? We have still among us Herbert Spencer—but he is seventy-seven years of age; his work is confessedly done, and the historians of the future will relegate him to the maturity of the century, not to its declining years.

In History we are more fortunate. Though I am endeavouring, as far as possible, not to mention persons still living among us, it will, I think, hardly be invidious to say that William E. Hartpole Lecky may certainly be considered the equal, if not the superior, of Hallam, Macaulay, Grote, and Froude; and Lecky, being born in 1838, may be described, I suppose, as still in late middle life rather than in old age; his work belongs to the later half of the century. Yet, if not in quality, in quantity our age suffers. Numerically speaking, great historians are certainly lacking in the declining years of the nineteenth century.

In Fiction, we are not entirely wanting in great names. We have, perhaps, no one quite of the first order of merit—no one quite the equal of Scott, or Dickens, or Thackeray, or George Eliot—but we have a considerable number of novelists of the second and third class (and, where the classes number twenty or more, it must be remembered that to belong to a second or third

class is a distinction not at all to be despised). Indeed, speaking of literature generally, I should be disposed to say that while we have no names among us quite of the first order of merit, there is a considerable increase in high average merit. In criticism specially—though there is still room for improvement—I think the declining years of the nineteenth century show a distinct advance upon that of its youth. I am not familiar with much of the cheap popular literature that, in the shape of small newspapers, now floods our railway bookstalls. Very probably they contain a good deal of scurrility, though I cannot speak from any personal knowledge. But our higher daily and weekly newspapers, such as the *Times* and *Spectator*, to say nothing of our principal reviews, would not now deal with an author in the manner that Keats and subsequently Tennyson were dealt with by the *Quarterly Review*. The great fault of modern criticism is that it is hasty, and consequently somewhat shallow; but this, from the press of work upon the critic, is more often his misfortune than his fault. When he is not pressed by circumstances, I think, in the average critic, there has been of late years an increase in conscientiousness and sense of responsibility. Possibly, also, the higher popular taste has become more refined. We no longer look upon flashy brilliancy as true criticism, and even, if persiflage evoke at times an irresistible smile, we instinctively feel that it is out of place in the criticism of a scholarly review. As a specimen of the branch of reviewing that was thought suitable to a high-class magazine sixty years ago, I append a short extract

from the criticism upon Tennyson's Poems that appeared in the April number of the *Quarterly Review*, 1833, the entire article being written much in the same strain: "Next comes another class of poems—Visions. The first is the *Palace of Art*, or a fine house, in which the poet *dreams* that he sees a fine collection of well-known pictures. An ordinary versifier would, no doubt, have followed the old routine, and duly described himself as walking into the Louvre or Buckingham Palace, and there seeing certain masterpieces of painting—a true poet dreams it. . . . The other vision is *A Dream of Fair Women*, in which the heroines of all ages—some, indeed, that belong to the times of 'heathen goddesses most rare,' pass before his view. We have not time to notice them all, but the second, whom we take to be Iphigenia, touches the heart with a stroke of nature more powerful than even the veil that the Grecian painter threw over the head of her father.

"Dimly I could descry
The stern black-bearded kings with wolfish eyes,
Watching to see me die.
The tall masts quivered as they lay afloat;
The temples, and the people, and the shore;
One drew a sharp knife through my tender throat—
Slowly and *nothing more!*"

What touching simplicity—what pathetic resignation—he cut my throat—'nothing more!' One might, indeed, ask 'what *more*' she would have?" *

* I quote from the reprint of the article that appeared in the *Standard*, March 18, 1884, about which time Tennyson was raised to the peerage. In justice both to reviewer and reviewed, it is right to state that in subsequent editions the poet greatly improved upon these certainly somewhat crude lines.

Criticism, like other things, is very much a case of supply and demand, and it is as true now as when Coleridge wrote, some seventy years ago, "As long as there are readers to be delighted with calumny, there will be found reviewers to calumniate."

The same remark that I made upon literature in the declining years of our century applies, I think, to medical and surgical science. If we have no very great names among us, it will hardly be denied that our leading physicians and surgeons show a much higher average merit than in the youth or even middle age of our century. And this leads me to suggest that the deficiency of very great men may, perhaps, be more apparent than real.

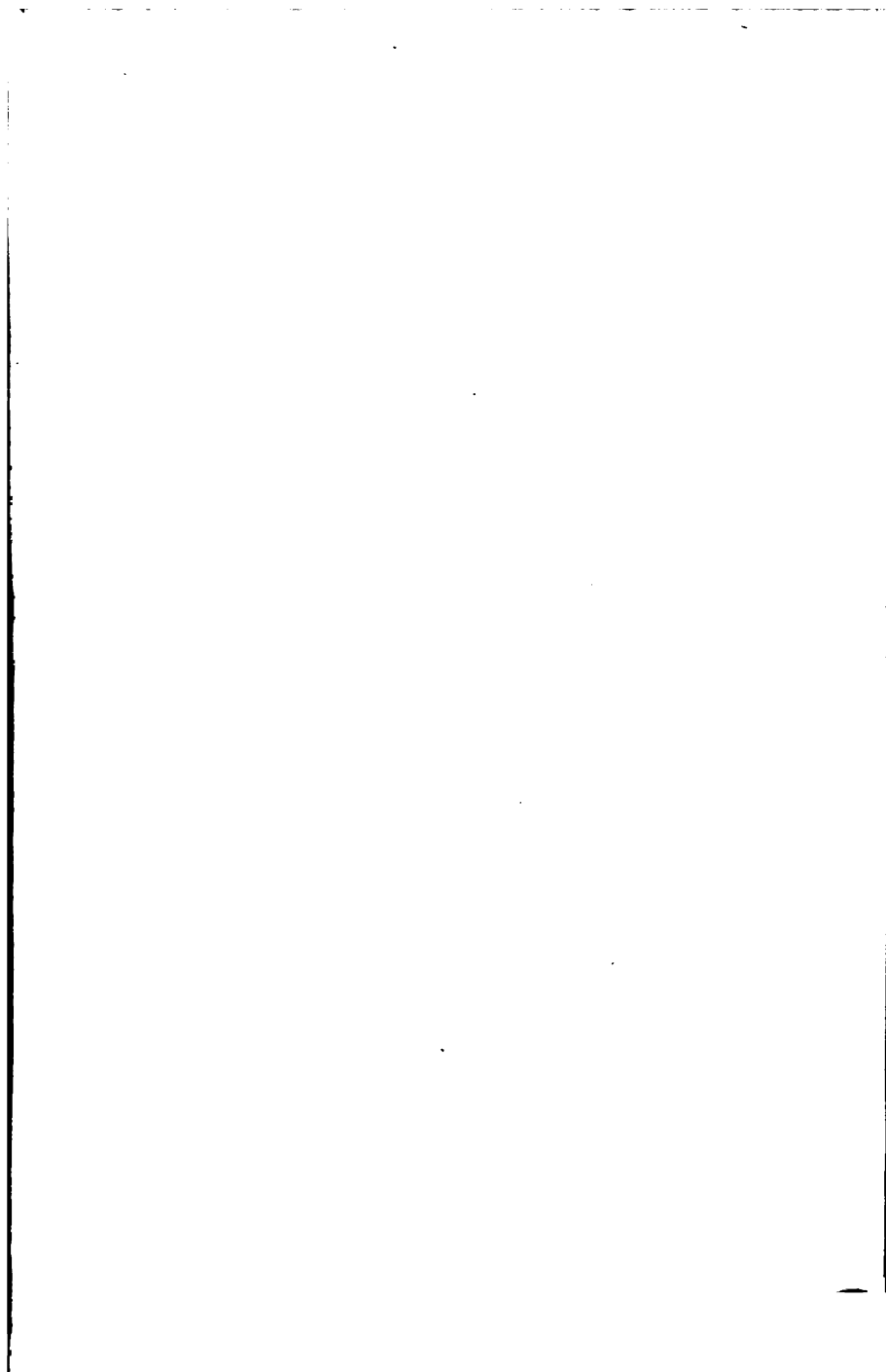
As a tall man appears taller in a roomful of small people than by the side of those of good average size, so it is possible that there are great men among us who have not yet had time to evince their superiority among the large numbers of others but little inferior to themselves. If, on the other hand, the decrease is real, may not the solution be that nations, like individuals, or like fruit-bearing trees, require a certain period for recuperation after superabundant and unusual putting forth of their powers? The greatness of the youth and maturity of our century may have caused its declining years to become a little exhausted, in which case the twentieth century may be all the more productive by reason of its predecessor's temporary rest.

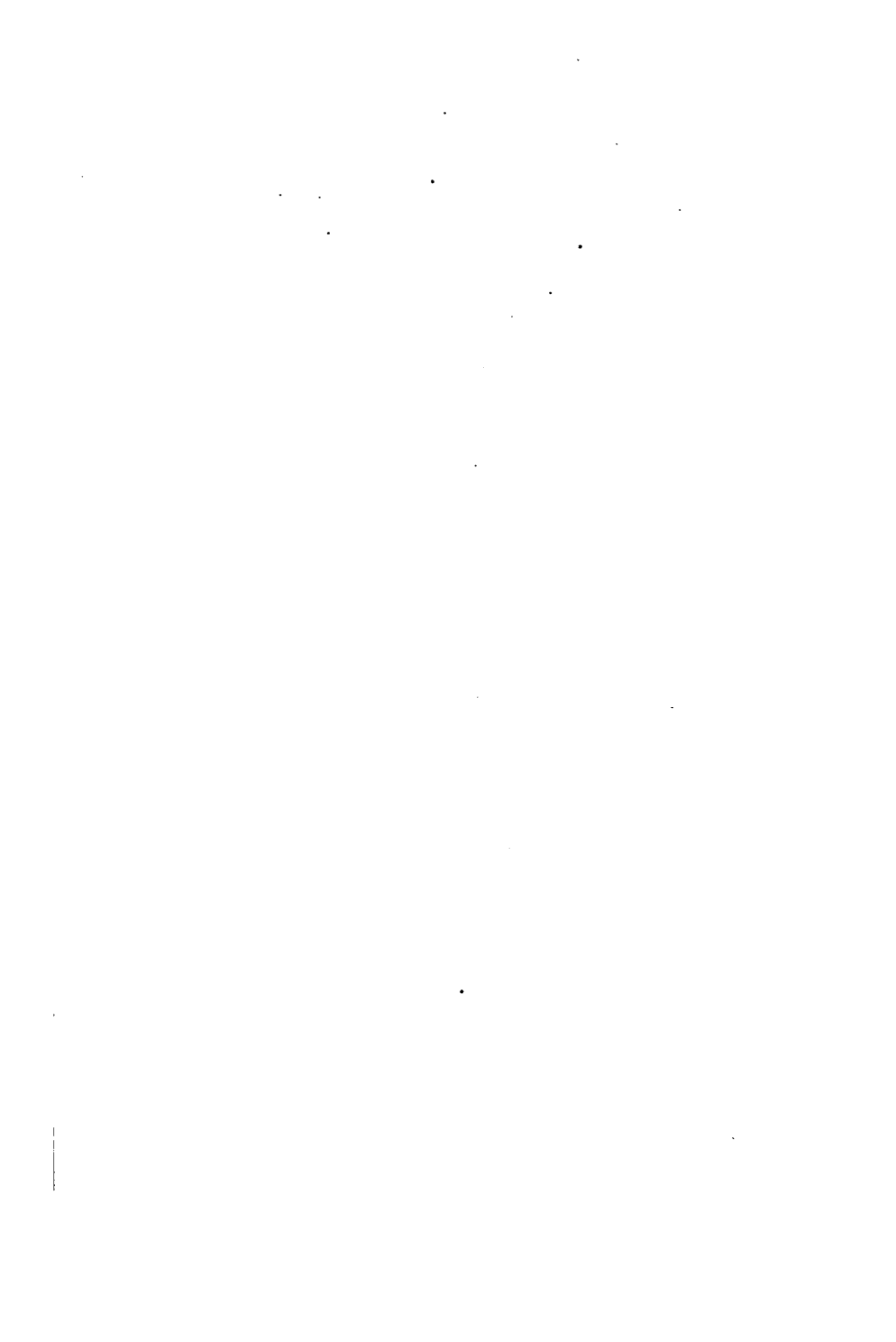
Both these solutions are more or less sanguine; but there is another solution, graver, far less hopeful, to

which I think we may not shut our eyes. Is it not possible that our present deficiency in men of the first order of ability is that in our modern system of forcing education young people are not encouraged to be original, nay, they have not time to be so? Alike in the Board Schools for the lower classes, and the cramming system for multitudinous examinations among delicate, growing boys and girls of the higher, the memory is exercised at the expense of the judgment. They are taught to acquire facts, but not to reflect upon them. Yet it is not a parrot-like, superficial acquaintance with facts that constitutes the wise man, but the full and comprehending use he makes of them; and this use modern education impedes rather than assists. There is a conservation of energy in brain power, as in other things; and if there be undue devotion to mechanical acquisition of facts, there will be a commensurate inability to think for ourselves. Thus under the present system of education we seem to have a dull level of respectable scholars, but few recruits to the brilliant army of original workers. I do not say that this is so, but I think it a question worthy of some consideration.

THE END.

PLYMOUTH :
WILLIAM BRENDON AND SON,
PRINTERS.







3 9015 08554 9118